

OXFORD EDITION

THE  
**Poetical Works**  
OF  
GEORGE CRABBE

EDITED BY

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## PREFACE

IN this edition of Crabbe's works, we have reproduced the text of the author's own edition, adding only the posthumous volume of *Tales*, practically left ready for publication by the poet, and the few poems gathered together under the titles 'Juvenilia' and 'Occasional Poems', which are reprinted from his son's edition of 1834. It is true that some of these were condemned by Crabbe himself as unworthy to live, but they are already known to many readers, and could hardly be left out.

The only notes are those made by Crabbe himself.

The arrangement of the poems is chronological. For the biographical matter we are indebted to the *Life* by his son, prefixed to the edition of 1834, and to Mr. Ainger's *Life of Crabbe* in the *English Men of Letters* edition.



## INTRODUCTION

It is not so much to be wondered at that Crabbe has been almost forgotten as that he should still be remembered; for he wrote in the first years of the splendours and glories of the Romantic Movement, and it is not strange that his sober, uninspired voice should almost have been forgotten. Had his poetry appeared a few years earlier, it would have marked a great and almost revolutionary crisis in literature, but it was just a little too late, and his 'ineffectual fires' paled before the dawn of the new day.

And yet there was a new light in Crabbe; his earlier work marks the appearance of a poet who, more than a decade before Wordsworth, looked out on human life with the same serious and faithful scrutiny, who had not, indeed, the power of interpreting what he saw in all its profounder significance, who had not learned like Wordsworth to see the glory which lies behind the grey day of human life, but who was at least sincere, sympathetic and real.

The literary movement of the eighteenth century had indeed advanced quickly, so quickly that it has often been found difficult to follow it, and people have continued to speak of the characteristic note of eighteenth-century literature under terms which apply only to the first quarter of the century. The Augustan manner in literature had indeed very rapidly given way to other influences. Pope is the last as well as the first of his school, with its cheerful optimism, its antithetical cleverness, its lucid but shallow conception of life. The place of the Augustan method in literature was taken by a movement which was at first simply realistic in a very bare

literal sense, and described the external conditions and circumstances of life with an almost photographic minuteness and precision. Defoe, who is the first great writer of this manner, had turned from the conventional subjects of the Augustan literature to set forth the habits of life, and the manner of thought and feeling of his own time, in a fashion, bare, dry, uninspired, but sincere and veracious; and had brought to this new work artistic qualities and capacities of so high an order that he has made the life of the time real to us in literature much as Hogarth has done in painting. The method which Defoe had translated into English from the Spanish Picaresque novel, was carried on by Fielding, not more faithfully, but with a larger outlook and a greater sense of the picturesque variety and contrast of life, so that while the earlier chapters of *Captain Jack* are more realistic, more literally true, than the adventures of Tom Jones or of Captain Booth, the world of Fielding has a greater variety of life and colour.

We can trace in the work of Fielding the beginning of yet another movement; it may seem paradoxical to say it, but it is obviously true that Fielding, who began to write *Joseph Andrews* as a parody, is himself strongly influenced by the sentimental movement. The creator of Parson Adams, the author of the scenes in the house of the widow in *Tom Jones*, is himself a sentimentalist; that is, he has added to the external realism of Defoe something of the more intimate reality of the emotional and sentimental aspect of human life.

The revolt against the Augustan temper begins with the return to the bare, harsh, crude facts of external life, but very soon the artists of the eighteenth century were carried on to the appreciation of the artistic importance and significance of the sentiment and pathos of human life. In England just as in France, in Richardson just as in Marivaux and Prévost, the sentimental mood grew out of the realistic.

It is this sentimental movement which determines the interest and the manner of a great part of the English and European

literature of the second half of the eighteenth century; in poetry, the work of Young, Blair, Macpherson, Goldsmith, and, in some measure, Cowper, and in prose, Richardson, Sterne, Goldsmith, and Mackenzie, all represent the movement, while on the continent Rousseau raised it to the level of a creed of humanity, and Goethe transfigured it in *Werther* till it almost touched the highest level of artistic achievement. The greatest artists of the Revolution, like Goethe himself, like Wordsworth and Coleridge, passed beyond it, but the influence of the movement can be traced far on in the nineteenth century in England, and even more in France. This sentimental movement has many aspects, and deserves a much more careful study than is often given to it, for it is under the terms of the literature of emotion and sensibility that most progress was made towards that emancipation of the artist from the conventional and trivial, from the domination of the rational temper of good taste, which was finally completed in the Revolutionary or Romantic movement.

For the moment we have to consider rather its weakness than its strength; for it had its very obvious weaknesses. The revulsion from the conventions and insincerities of the town led to a treatment of country life which was often graceful and charming, but was also often unreal and misleading because it was merely sentimental. We can find an excellent example of these merits and defects in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. Every one must feel how different is the gracious human feeling of this poem from the frigid banalities of the occasional pictures of human life in *The Seasons*; but, at the same time, the humane temper, the kindly and gracious spirit of the poem, cannot hide from us the fact that Goldsmith is writing about the village and its life, not as it actually existed, but, partly at least, under the terms of a sentimental convention.

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,  
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,

Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,  
 And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd :  
 Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
 Seats of my youth, where every sport could please.

Such lines may pass ; we all have felt the emotion, we all know the sentiment ; but what are we to say to these ?

A time there was, ere England's grief began,  
 When every rood of ground maintain'd its man ;  
 For him light labour spread the wholesome store,  
 Just gave what life required, but gave no more :  
 His best companions, innocence and health,  
 And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

This is mere sentimentality, wanton and almost heartless. The amiable and gentle artist has lost himself and his sense of veracity, while he has given the reins to an emotionalism which is not sincere. The truth is, of course, that the ' return to nature ' led to the revival of that idyllic sentiment which has haunted all literature, the Alexandrian, the Mediaeval, the Neo-classical, and even the Elizabethan, and the idyllic sentiment, with all its grace, has a perilous tendency to the sugary sentiment of a modern Christmas card. In the eighteenth century, men and women thought they were tired of the town, and imagined a country life which had never existed, and this fell in very naturally with their delight in the newly recovered sense of the artistic value of their emotions.

Crabbe is not, indeed, untouched by this movement and these sentiments, but his work, in great measure, represents a revolt against certain aspects of it and a reversion to something more like the earlier realistic movement.

Crabbe learned early that he had facility in the composition of verse, and in his youthful days produced a great deal which was moulded on the fashion of the Augustan poetry, but it is hardly necessary to say anything about his early verse, for it has no value. It was not until the year 1783 that Crabbe published any work which represents his own individual point

of view and his independence as an artist. The transition from the conventional insipidity of his early work is indeed very sudden, nothing has survived which enables us to trace the development of his new temper, and to explain the origin of his new work. He has suddenly moved from the banal platitudes of his Augustan imitations to the strong, sincere manner of his mature work. For in *The Village*, the first work of his maturer style, Crabbe reached his highest level; indeed, his later work may be looked upon as little more than an expansion of what he did there.

*The Village* was written in a mood, half scornful, half indignant, and was clearly intended to be contrasted with Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. Here and there he quotes phrases from Goldsmith, only to heighten the effect of his very different picture, and we must allow something for the exaggeration which is produced by the half-controversial intention. The picture is too sombre, the shadows are too dark, the poem is so harsh as to be unpleasing, and, as we judge, it is not wholly true.

And yet there is this thing worth noticing. We have returned to the sombre grey tones of Defoe's picture of the life of the little beggar-boys in London, but there is a new note, a note of passion, of protest, of indignation. What is it that has happened?

The Village Life and every care that reigns  
O'er youthful peasants and declining swains;  
What labour yields, and what, that labour past,  
Age, in its hours of languor, finds at last;  
What form the real picture of the poor,  
Demand a song—the Muse can give no more.

Yes, thus the Muses sing of happy swains,  
Because the Muses never knew their pains.

I grant indeed that fields and flocks have charms  
For him that grazes or for him that farms;

## INTRODUCTION

But when amid such pleasing scenes I trace  
 The poor laborious native of the place,  
 And see the mid-day sun with fervid ray,  
 On their bare heads and dewy temples play;  
 While some with feeble heads and fainter hearts  
 Deplore their fortune, yet sustain their parts;  
 Then shall I dare those real ills to hide  
 In tinsel trappings of poetic pride?

It is thus that Crabbe opens the new literature of the life of the labouring poor in town or country. He throws aside the traditional pastoral, the idyllic mood, the gracious temper, and he sets out to write the real life of the labourer. He has at least the desire to set out the truth.

He begins, therefore, with a description of a landscape, not idyllic, not beautiful, but hard and grim, a landscape not drawn from fancy, but literally sketched from the sandy flats of the eastern coast.

Lo! where the heath with withering brake grown o'er,  
 Lends the light turf that warms the neighb'ring poor;  
 From thence a length of burning sand appears  
 Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears.

Crabbe knows that there are other places where Nature is fairer and kinder, but the beauty of Nature is of no avail to make the life of the peasant easier.

But yet in other scenes, more fair in view,  
 Where Plenty smiles—alas! she smiles for few—  
 And those who taste not, yet behold her store,  
 Are as the slaves that dig the golden ore,  
 The wealth around them makes them doubly poor.

The true character of the life of the peasant is better reflected in the harsh, unlovely aspect of Nature than in its more gracious and beautiful scenes, and he draws a picture, in vivid strokes, of the hard life, the want and hunger, the inevitable and rapid growth of physical infirmity.

Or will you deem them amply paid in health,  
 Labour's fair child, that languishes with wealth?



Go, then ! and see them rising with the sun,  
Through a long course of daily toil to run ;  
See them beneath the dogstar's raging heat,  
When the knees tremble, and the temples beat ;  
Behold them, leaning on their scythes, look o'er  
The labour past, and foils to come explore ;  
See them alternate suns and showers engage,  
And hoard up aches and anguish for their age ;

Yet grant them health, 'tis not for us to tell,  
Though the head droops not, that the heart is well ;  
Or will you praise that homely, healthy fare,  
Plenteous and plain that happy peasants share ?  
Oh ! trifle not with wants you cannot feel,  
Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal—  
Homely, not wholesome, plain, not plenteous ; such  
As you, who praise, would never deign to touch.

The picture is gloomy and almost unrelieved, and the second part of the poem, which deals with the ' pleasures of the village ', is gloomier still, for the pleasures of the poor, as Crabbe sees them, are drunken revels, sordid vices ; the poor repeat only too faithfully the lessons of debauch and riotousness which they learn from the more prosperous classes.

It may be said that all this represents a morbid and extravagant observation of social conditions in England, and it must be admitted that the picture deals with only one side of things ; but there is an unmistakable accent of sincerity in the work. The truth is that Crabbe, the most respectable, the most conservative of artists, is yet the creature and child of the great movements of Europe. Behind the prosaic and unimaginative verses, there is a certain passion, a glow of indignation and resentment which anticipates the mood of the Revolution ; and it is just this which gives a new quality to what would otherwise be rather poor poetry.

It is unnecessary to speak of his later work : where this is good it carries on the quality of *The Village*, but while the range of treatment is larger, it can hardly be said anywhere to reach

a higher level, and frequently enough it falls far below that of the earlier work.

Speaking broadly, Crabbe's poetry has always the same qualities, both good and bad. The verse is easy, but not musical; the method antithetical, the language frigid and often conventional; but, on the other hand, the observation of Nature and life is keen, shrewd, sincere, the poet's sympathy with human faults and distresses is real, and every now and then the poor verse glows with a passionate resentment which almost takes the place of imagination. A great poet Crabbe assuredly was not; he cannot be placed in the great society of Burns and Wordsworth and Shelley, but he belongs to the new world, he has shaken off the conventional blindness of the Augustan artists, has even risen above the gracious sentimentalism of Goldsmith, and he sees the world as it is, not, indeed, completely, or profoundly as Wordsworth does, but still sincerely, and he has the compelling force to make his readers feel the truth of his description.

A short account of Crabbe's life may help us to understand more clearly both the merits and limitations of his poetry. Aldeburgh, where he was born on Christmas Eve, 1754, is a small seaport on the coast of Suffolk. At one time fairly prosperous, the little town had suffered from the constant encroachments of the sea, and at the time of the poet's birth was a poor and squalid sort of place, with but 'two parallel, unpaved streets, running between mean and scrambling houses'. Nor was the country round much less depressing, being flat, treeless and marshy.

"Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,  
Reign o'er the land and rot the blighted rye."

The poet's father, after trying to be a schoolmaster, settled down in his native town as collector of the salt-duties, a post which his father had filled before him. He had six children, of whom George was the eldest. He seems very early in life to have

shown a strong love for books, and some considerable capacity for learning. Seeing this, his father determined to give him as good an education as possible, and sent him first to a small boarding-school at Bungay, and afterwards to a rather better school at Stowmarket, where he seems to have made the most of his opportunities. For he left the school before he was fourteen, and yet he seems to have brought away with him a very fair knowledge of many of the great classical authors as well as of the best English poets. Wherever he came across books he read them, and what he read he remembered. His father having decided that he should become a doctor, he left school and was apprenticed to a surgeon in a small village near Bury St. Edmunds. Here he had also to help with the work of a farm, and to sleep with the plough-boy : the life was rough and uncongenial, and he was not making much progress in his proper work, so after three years he left and went to Woodbridge, where he worked under a Mr. Page for some four years, but he never cared for the profession of medicine. The time spent at Woodbridge, however, was a very happy one, and was of very great service to him in the general development of his mind. For there he found a little society of young men who met together in the evening for the discussion of questions of mutual interest, and it is easy to understand how helpful and quickening this must have been to the young man, sore and sensitive as he was after the rough farm-life and the unresponsive companionship of farm-servants.

At Woodbridge, too, he met and loved the 'Mira' of his poems. This was a Miss Sarah Elmy, who lived with her uncle and aunt at Parham, a village of great beauty and charm, very different indeed from the dreary country to which Crabbe was accustomed. Miss Elmy was of better position than he, and her people were none too eager to welcome him as a suitor, but they were courteous and kindly always, and the lady herself never wavered. He had begun to write verses, some of which

found their way to magazines, and when he had been about three years at Woodbridge he published, in the form of a pamphlet, a longer and more ambitious poem, called *Inebriety*, a didactic satire, showing the phases of intemperance as observed by himself among various classes of society. He had no doubt opportunities for observation of the vice, but his treatment of the subject is dead, and too obviously imitative, and it is not surprising that the poem attracted practically no attention. In 1775 he returned to Aldeburgh, and for a little while helped his father in his work at the quay, every now and again getting some little occasion for practising his own profession. But he was increasingly conscious of his ignorance of medicine and surgery, and after a short time at home he went up to London to study further. His money did not last very long, and soon he was back in Aldeburgh, taking over the practice of an apothecary who had left the place in despair of making a decent living. His patients were all of the poorest, and there seemed little prospect of ever making enough to marry. Gradually he was convinced that he was not made for the life of an apothecary, and at last, towards the close of the year 1779, he made up his mind to cast everything aside, to go to London and venture all. It was indeed a risk—his father could not help him if he would, and indeed he was not greatly inclined, for it was rather a bitter disappointment to him that his son, for whom he had made considerable sacrifices, should, after all, give up his profession and start afresh on new lines. The Crabbes were all poor, and it seemed doubtful if money could be raised for the journey to London. However, a Mr. Dudley North was persuaded to advance £5, and Crabbe, having paid his debts, set out for London with £3 in his pocket, and little else beside. This was in April, 1780.

Then followed a period of poverty, of selling or pawning what little belongings he possessed, of borrowing from friends, of besieging possible patrons, of efforts to launch on the public poems like *The Candidate*.

Poor Crabbe was very near despair : ' want stared him in the face, and a gaol seemed the only immediate refuge for his head.' As a last resort he resolved to make one more appeal for help, and ' impelled', as he says, ' by some propitious influence,' he fixed on Edmund Burke, and having written an urgent letter of appeal, took it himself to Burke's house and spent the whole night walking up and down Westminster Bridge in an agony of suspense.

Along with the letter Crabbe had sent some specimens of his verse. Whether it was that these impressed Burke with a sense of their value, or that the letter was different from the usual run of appeals, at any rate he replied by an immediate gift of money and a promise of help in making Crabbe's poems known. Inspired with fresh hope and energy Crabbe set to work to complete and revise various of his poems, which he then submitted to Burke for criticism. The great man was more than kind. The poet ' was encouraged to lay open his views, past and present, and to display whatever reading and acquirements he possessed, to explain his causes for disappointment, and the cloudiness of his prospects.' As a result, Burke helped him to publish *The Library* (1781), commending him to the very publisher who had already refused the poem, discussed the question of his future, and asked him down to Beaconsfield, where he was treated as an honoured guest.

Here he first met Charles James Fox and Sir Joshua Reynolds, and through them came to know Samuel Johnson, who criticized and offered emendations of his poems. And here Crabbe's future was decided. Burke talked much with him and became convinced he should turn to the Church : his gifts were much more in that direction, he knew Latin fairly well, he had read very widely, his piety was undoubted ; altogether Burke thought him fitted for Orders and commended him to the Bishop of Norwich, by whom he was ordained to the curacy of his native town on December 31, 1781. Later on he was appointed Chaplain to the Duke of Rutland in his Castle of Belvoir : the story of

'The Patron' was in all probability prompted by his experience in this dependent, and not altogether satisfactory, position.

*The Village* appeared in May, 1783, and in the same year Thurlow gave him two small livings in Devonshire, of no great value, but enough to allow him to marry: it was not thought necessary to reside in Devonshire, and Crabbe and his wife settled down in rooms assigned them in Belvoir Castle. But the position was not satisfactory, and, after a short trial of it, Crabbe found it advisable to accept a curacy in Leicestershire, and moved to the parsonage.

In 1785 he published *The Newspaper*, but it did not greatly add to his fame, being a return to the style of *The Library*, and lacking the life and realism of *The Village*. For twenty-two years he published nothing more: he continued to write, and wrote much, but most of it he burned. In 1789 the Chancellor allowed Crabbe to exchange his Devonshire livings for two in the Vale of Belvoir, and he then moved into the Rectory House at Muston, near Grantham. But he did not remain there very long. His wife's uncle died in 1792, and a great part of his estate came to Mrs. Elmy and eventually to Mrs. Crabbe. The old house at Parham became vacant, and the Crabbes moved thither. Here he again met Mr. Fox, who expressed his regret that he had ceased to write, and offered his help in revising any future poems.

His outward circumstances were now much more easy and comfortable, but he had grave anxieties in his home life. Of seven children only two survived, and this preyed on his wife's mind: for long she had wretched health and eventually her mind gave way. Crabbe nursed her devotedly till her death in 1813. No doubt this great trouble in his home helped to accentuate his inclination to look at the more gloomy side of life. The education of his two sons, and the care of his invalid wife, occupied the greater part of his time, but he continued to read largely and to write steadily.

After thirteen years' absence he returned to his rectory, urged thereto by his bishop, who had become alive to the evils of absenteeism. Crabbe did not very much care about going back to Muston, and found the life there rather irksome and not altogether easy. He had been too long away, and the changes which had taken place did not please him. No doubt the people were somewhat indifferent towards a clergyman who was content to remain so long away from them, and he did not improve his position by preaching violently against dissent.

It was now twenty-two years since he had published anything. In 1807 he brought out a volume of poems, old and new. The chief among them was *The Parish Register*, a series of narratives of the lives of the village poor, related by the clergyman of the parish. The book at once gained the public ear and established Crabbe's position as a poet of distinction. The reviews were unanimous in praise, and within eighteen months four editions were called for.

One great pleasure came to the poet from this publication. He sent a copy to Sir Walter Scott, who wrote acknowledging the gift and telling the poet how much he had been impressed by his earlier poems, some of which he had come across casually when only a lad of eighteen. This was the beginning of a friendship which lasted throughout the lives of both poets.

The success of *The Parish Register* encouraged Crabbe to go on with a long poem, *The Borough*, which had been in hand for some time. It was brought out in 1810, and was at once a success. The 'Borough' is his native place, Aldeburgh, the characters are the people he has known; the atmosphere is grey and depressing, the conditions of life narrow and uninspiring, but the whole picture is extraordinarily real and life-like. The critics warned the poet against 'his frequent lapses into disgusting representations', and it was even suggested that the 'function of Poetry is not to present any truth if it is unpleasant'.

Crabbe was greatly exercised about these criticisms, and in

the preface to his next production, *The Tales* (1812), he strove to answer the objections raised. In this book he no longer dealt with the very poor; many of the stories were based on incidents in the life of his own family or of his friends and acquaintance. The volume was well received by the public, and favourably reviewed by Jeffery, who, indeed, showed a remarkable appreciation of Crabbe's poems throughout.

In September, 1813, Mrs. Crabbe died. Her husband found life at Muston intolerably dreary, and gladly accepted the offer of the Rectory of Trowbridge. Here he found himself in the midst of a number of sympathetic, appreciative people, for Trowbridge is not very far from Bath, and Bath and its neighbourhood in those days was a favourite resort of the more intellectual world. Among others he made the acquaintance of the poet Rogers, by whose advice he went up to London for a time and mixed with the literary society of the day, working steadily all the while at his new poems. The *Tales of the Hall* were published in June, 1819, by John Murray, who two years previously had made an offer of £3000 for the new poems along with the copyright of Crabbe's earlier works. The new volume had much of the quality of the old, with here and there an increase of poetry, more careful writing, more eloquent descriptive passages.

The last thirteen years of his life were spent at Trowbridge, with an occasional visit to friends in the neighbourhood or in London, and one noteworthy visit to Scott in the autumn of 1822.

He still continued to write copiously. A large number of manuscript volumes were left at his death, among them another volume of *Tales* all but ready for the press. A selection from these were published as *Posthumous Tales* in the edition brought out by his son in 1834. In 1832 he died after a few days' illness.



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## POEMS



## JUVENILIA

### CONCLUDING LINES OF PRIZE POEM ON HOPE

[1772]

BUT, above all, the POEM owns thy powers—  
HOPE leads him on, and every fear devours ;  
He writes, and, unsuccessful, writes again,  
Nor thinks the last laborious work in vain ;  
New schemes he forms, and various plots he  
tries,  
To win the laurel, and possess the PRIZE.

### PARODY ON ' MY TIME, O YE MUSES '

[1772]

My days, oh ye lovers, were happily sped,  
Ere you or your whimsies got into my head ;  
I could laugh, I could sing, I could trifle and  
jest,

And my heart play'd a regular tune in my  
breast.

But now, lack-a-day ! what a change for the  
worse,

'Tis as heavy as lead, yet as wild as a horse.

My fingers, ere love had tormented my mind,  
Could guide my pen gently to what I design'd.  
I could make an enigma, a rebus, or riddle,  
Or tell a short tale of a dog and a fiddle ;  
But since this vile Cupid has got in my brain,  
I beg of the gods to assist in my strain.

And whatever my subject, the fancy still  
roves,

And sings of hearts, raptures, flames, sorrows,  
and loves.

### THE WISH

[1772-4]

My Mira, shepherds, is as fair  
As sylvan nymphs who haunt the vale,  
As sylphs who dwell in purest air,  
As fays who skim the dusky dale,  
As Venus was when Venus fled  
From watery Triton's oozy bed.

CR.

My Mira, shepherds, has a voice  
As soft as Syrinx in her grove,  
As sweet as echo makes her choice,  
As mild as whispering virgin-love ;  
As gentle as the winding stream,  
Or fancy's song when poets dream.

### ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM SPRINGALL LEVETT

[1774]

WHAT ! though no trophies peer above his  
dust,

Nor sculptured conquests deck his sober bust ;

What ! though no earthly thunders sound his  
name,

Death gives him conquest, and our sorrows  
fame ;

One sigh reflection heaves, but shuns excess—  
More should we mourn him, did we love him  
less.

### INEBRIETY ; A POEM<sup>1</sup>

[1775]

#### PREFACE

Presumption or meanness are but too  
often the only articles to be discovered in  
a preface. Whilst one author haughtily  
affects to despise the public attention,  
another timidly courts it. I would no more  
boast for than disdain applause, and therefore  
should advance nothing in favour of the  
following little Poem, did it not appear a  
cruelty and disregard to send a first produc-  
tion naked into the world.

The WORLD ! — how presumptuous, and  
yet how trifling the sound. Every man,  
gentle reader, has a world of his own, and  
whether it consists of half a score or half a  
thousand friends, 'tis his, and he loves to

<sup>1</sup> The following is given as in the edition of  
1824.

boast of it. Into my world, therefore, I commit this, my Muse's earliest labour, nothing doubting the clemency of the climate, nor fearing the partiality of the censorious.

Something by way of apology for this trifle is, perhaps, necessary; especially for those parts wherein I have taken such great liberties with Mr. Pope. That gentleman, secure in immortal fame, would forgive me: forgive me, too, my friendly critic; I promise thee, thou wilt find the extracts from the Swan of Thames the best part of the performance.

### INEBRIETY

THE mighty spirit, and its power, which  
stains<sup>1</sup>

The bloodless cheek, and vivifies the brains,  
I sing. Say, ye, its fiery votaries true,  
The jovial curate, and the shrill-tongued  
shrew;

Ye, in the floods of limpid poison nurst,  
Where bowl the second charms like bowl the  
first;

Say how, and why, the sparkling ill is shed,  
The heart which hardens, and which rules the  
head.

When winter stern his gloomy front uprears,  
A sable void the barren earth appears;  
The meads no more their former verdure  
boast,

Fast bound their streams, and all their beauty  
lost;

The herds, the flocks, in icy garments mourn,  
And wildly murmur for the spring's return;  
From snow-topp'd hills the whirlwinds keenly  
blow,

Howl through the woods, and pierce the vales  
below;

Through the sharp air a flaky torrent flies,  
Mocks the slow sight, and hides the gloomy  
skies;

The fleecy clouds their chilly bosoms bare,  
And shed their substance on the floating air;  
The floating air their downy substance glides  
Through springing waters, and prevents their  
tides;

<sup>1</sup> 'The mighty Mother, and her son, who  
brings  
The Smithfield muses to the ear of kings,'  
&c.—POPE'S *Dunciad*.

Seizes the rolling waves, and, as a god,  
Charms their swift race, and stops the reflux  
flood;

The opening valves, which fill the venal road,  
Then scarcely urge along the sanguine flood;  
The labouring pulse, a slower motion rules,  
The tendons stiffen, and the spirit cools;  
Each asks the aid of Nature's sister, Art,  
To cheer the senses, and to warm the heart.

The gentle fair on nervous tea relies,  
Whilst gay good-nature sparkles in her  
eyes;

An inoffensive scandal fluttering round,  
Too rough to tickle, and too light to wound;  
Champagne the courtier drinks, the spleen to  
chase,

The colonel burgundy, and port his grace;  
Turtle and 'rrac the city rulers charm,  
Ale and content the labouring peasants warm:  
O'er the dull embers, happy Colin sits,  
Colin, the prince of joke, and rural wits;  
Whilst the wind whistles through the hollow  
panes,

He drinks, nor of the rude assault complains;  
And tells the tale, from sire to son retold,  
Of spirits vanishing near hidden gold;  
Of moon-clad imps that tremble by the  
dew,

Who skim the air, or glide o'er waters blue:  
The throng invisible that, doubtless, float  
By mouldering tombs, and o'er the stagnant  
moat;

Fays dimly glancing on the russet plain,  
And all the dreadful nothing of the green.

Peace be to such, the happiest and the best,  
Who with the forms of fancy urge their jest;  
Who wage no war with an avenger's rod,  
Nor, in the pride of season curse their God.

When in the vaulted arch Lucina gleams,  
And gaily dances o'er the azure streams;

On silent ether when a trembling sound  
Reverberates, and wildly floats around,  
Breaking through trackless space upon the  
ear,

Conclude the Bacchanalian rustic near:  
O'er hills and vales the jovial savage reels,  
Fire in his head and frenzy at his heels;  
From paths direct the bending hero swerves,  
And shapes his way in ill-proportioned curves.  
Now safe arrived, his sleeping rib he calls,  
And madly thunders on the muddy walls;



The well-known sounds an equal fury move,  
For rage meets rage, as love enkindles love :

In vain the 'waken'd infant's accents shrill,  
The humble regions of the cottage fill ;  
In vain the cricket chirps the mansion through,  
'Tis war, and blood, and battle must ensue.  
As when, on humble stage, him Satan hight  
Defies the brazen hero to the fight :  
From twanging strokes what dire misfortunes  
rise,

What fate to maple arms and glassen eyes !  
Here lies a leg of elm, and there a stroke  
From ashen neck has whirl'd a head of oak.  
So drops from either power, with vengeance  
big,

A remnant night-cap and an old cut wig ;  
Titles unmusical retorted round,  
On either ear with leaden vengeance sound ;  
Till equal valour, equal wounds create,  
And drowsy peace concludes the fell debate ;  
Sleep in her woollen mantle wraps the pair,  
And sheds her poppies on the ambient air :  
Intoxication flies, as fury fled,  
On rooky pinions quits the aching head ;  
Returning reason cools the fiery blood,  
And drives from memory's seat the rosy god.  
Yet still he holds o'er some his maddening  
rule,

Still sways his sceptre, and still knows his  
fool ;  
Witness the livid lip, and fiery front,  
With many a smarting trophy placed upon't ;  
The hollow eye, which plays in misty springs,  
And the hoarse voice, which rough and broken  
rings :

These are his triumphs, and o'er these he  
reigns,

The blinking deity of reeling brains,  
See Inebriety ! her wand she waves,  
And lo ! her pale, and lo ! her purple slaves !  
Sots in embroidery, and sots in crape,  
Of every order, station, rank, and shape :  
The king, who nods upon his rattle throne ;  
The staggering peer, to midnight revel prone ;  
The slow-tongued bishop, and the deacon  
sly,

The humble pensioner, and gownsman dry ;  
The proud, the mean, the selfish, and the  
great,

Swell the dull throng, and stagger into state.

Lo ! proud Flaminius at the splendid board,  
The easy chaplain of an atheist lord,

Quaffs the bright juice, with all the gust of  
sense,

And clouds his brain in torpid elegance ;  
In china vases, see ! the sparkling ill,  
From gay decanters view the rosy rill ;  
The neat-carved pipes in silver settle laid,  
The screw by mathematic cunning made :

Oh, happy priest ! whose God, like Egypt's,  
lies,

At once the deity and sacrifice.

But is Flaminius then the man alone

To whom the joys of swimming brains are  
known ?

Lo ! the poor toper whose untutor'd sense,  
Sees bliss in ale, and can with wine dispense ;<sup>1</sup>  
Whose head proud fancy never taught to steer,  
Beyond the muddy ecstasies of beer ;  
But simple nature can her longing quench,  
Behind the settle's curve, or humbler bench :  
Some kitchen fire diffusing warmth around,  
The semi-globe by hieroglyphics crown'd ;  
Where canvass purse displays the brass en-  
roll'd,

Nor waiters rave, nor landlords thirst for gold ;  
Ale and content his fancy's bounds confine,  
He asks no limpid punch, no rosy wine ;  
But sees, admitted to an equal share,  
Each faithful swain the heady potion bear :  
Go wiser thou ! and in thy scale of taste,  
Weigh gout and gravel against ale and  
rest ;

Call vulgar palates what thou judgest so ;  
Say beer is heavy, windy, cold, and slow ;  
Laugh at poor sots with insolent pretence,  
Yet cry, when tortured, where is Providence ?

In various forms the madd'ning spirit  
moves,

This drinks and fights, another drinks and  
loves.

A bastard zeal, of different kinds it shows,  
And now with rage, and now religion glows :  
The frantic soul bright reason's path defies,  
Now creeps on earth, now triumphs in the  
skies ;

Swims in the seas of error, and explores,  
Through midnight mists, the fluctuating  
shores ;

<sup>1</sup> Lo the poor Indian ! whose untutor'd  
mind,

Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the  
wind, &c.—POPE'S *Essay on Man*.

From wave to wave in rocky channel glides,  
And sinks in woe, or on presumption slides ;  
In pride exalted, or by shame depressed,  
An angel-devil, or a human-beast.

Some rage in all the strength of folly mad ;  
Some love stupidity, in silence clad,  
Are never quarrelsome, are never gay,  
But sleep, and groan, and drink the night  
away ;

Old Torpio nods, and as the laugh goes round,  
Grunts through the nasal duct, and joins the  
sound,

Then sleeps again, and, as the liquors pass,  
Wakes at the friendly jog, and takes his  
glass :

Alike to him who stands, or reels, or moves,  
The elbow chair, good wine, and sleep he loves ;  
Nor cares of state disturb his easy head,  
By grosser fumes, and calmer follies fed ;  
Nor thoughts of when, or where, or how to  
come,

The canvass general, or the general doom :  
Extremes ne'er reach'd one passion of his  
soul,

A villain tame, and an unmettled fool,  
To half his vices he has but pretence,  
For they usurp the place of common sense ;  
To half his little merits has no claim,  
For very indolence has raised his name ;  
Happy in this, that, under Satan's sway,  
His passions tremble, but will not obey.

The vicar at the table's front presides,  
Whose presence a monastic life derides ;  
The reverend wig, in sideway order placed,  
The reverend band, by rubric stains disgraced,  
The leering eye, in wayward circles roll'd,  
Mark him the pastor of a jovial fold,  
Whose various texts excite a loud applause,  
Favouring the bottle, and the good old cause.  
See ! the dull smile which fearfully appears,  
When gross indecency her front uprears,  
The joy conceal'd, the fiercer burns within,  
As masks afford the keenest gust to sin ;  
Imagination helps the reverend sire,  
And spreads the sails of sub-divine desire ;  
But when the gay immoral joke goes round,  
When shame and all her blushing train are  
drawn'd,

Rather than hear his God blasphemed, he  
takes

The last loved glass, and then the board for-  
sakes.

Not that religion prompts the sober thought,  
But slavish custom has the practice taught ;  
Besides, this zealous son of warm devotion  
Has a true Levite bias for promotion.

Vicars must with discretion go astray,  
Whilst bishops may be damn'd the nearest  
way :

So puny robbers individuals kill,  
When hector-heroes murder as they will.

Good honest Curio elbows the divine,  
And strives a social sinner how to shine ;  
The dull quaint tale is his, the lengthen'd tale,  
That Wilton farmers give you with their ale,  
How midnight ghosts o'er vaults terrific pass,  
Dance o'er the grave, and slide along the grass ;

Or how pale Cicely within the wood  
Call'd Satan forth, and bargain'd with her  
blood :

These, honest Curio, are thine, and these  
Are the dull treasures of a brain at peace ;  
No wit intoxicates thy gentle skull,  
Of heavy, native, unwrought folly full :  
Bowl upon bowl in vain exert their force,  
The breathing spirit takes a downward course,  
Or vainly soaring upwards to the head,  
Meets an impenetrable fence of lead.

Hast thou, oh reader ! search'd o'er gentle  
Gay,

Where various animals their powers display ?  
In one strange group a chattering race are  
hurl'd,  
Led by the monkey who had seen the world.

Like him Fabricio steals from guardian's side,  
Swims not in pleasure's stream, but sips the  
tide :

He hates the bottle, yet but thinks it right  
To hoast next day the honours of the night ;  
None like your coward can describe a fight.  
See him as down the sparkling potion goes,  
Labour to grin away the horrid dose ;  
In joy-feign'd gaze his misty eyeballs float,  
Th' uncivil spirit gurgling at his throat ;  
So looks dim Titan through a wintry scene,  
And faintly cheers the woe foreboding swain.

Timon, long practised in the school of art,  
Has lost each finer feeling of the heart ;  
Triumphs o'er shame, and, with delusive wiles,  
Laughs at the idiot he himself beguiles :  
So matrons past the awe of censure's tongue,  
Deride the blushes of the fair and young.

Few with more fire on every subject spoke,  
But chief he loved the gay immoral joke;  
The words most sacred, stole from holy writ,  
He gave a newer form, and call'd them wit.

Vice never had a more sincere ally,  
So bold no sinner, yet no sant so sly ;

Learn'd, but not wise, and without virtue  
brave,

A gay, deluding, philosophic knave.  
When Bacchus' joys his airy fancy fire,  
They stir a new, but still a false desire ;

And to the comfort of each untaught fool,  
Horace in English vindicates the bowl.  
'The man,' says Timon, 'who is drunk is  
blest.'

No fears disturb, no cares destroy his rest ;  
In thoughtless joy he reels away his life,  
Nor dreads that worst of ills, a noisy wife.'

'Oh ! place me, Jove, where none but women  
come,  
And thunders worse than thine afflict the  
room,

Where one eternal nothing flutters round,  
And senseless titt'ring sense of mirth con-  
found ;

Or lead me bound to garret, Babel-high,  
Where frantic poet rolls his crazy eye,  
Tiring the ear with oft-repeated chimes,  
And smiling at the never-ending rhymes :  
E'en here, or there, I'll be as blest as Jove,  
Give me tobacco, and the wine I love.'

Applause from hands the dying accents break,  
Of staggering sots who vainly try to speak ;  
From Milo, him who hangs upon each word,  
And in loud praises splits the tortured board,  
Collects each sentence, ere it's better known,  
And makes the mutilated joke his own,  
At weekly club to flourish, where he rules,  
The glorious president of grosser fools.

But cease, my Muse ! of those, or these  
enough,

The fools who listen, and the knaves who  
scoff ;

The jest profane, that mocks th' offended  
God,

Defies his power, and sets at nought his rod ;

'Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus,  
Non eget,' &c., &c. - HORACE.

The empty laugh, discretion's vainest foe,  
From fool to fool re-echoed to and fro ;  
The sly indecency, that slowly springs  
From barren wit, and halts on trembling  
wings :

Enough of these, and all the charms of wine,  
Be sober joys, and social evenings mine ;  
Where peace and reason, unsoil'd mirth im-  
prove

The powers of friendship and the joys of love ;  
Where thought meets thought ere words its  
form array,

And all is sacred, elegant, and gay :  
Such pleasure leaves no sorrow on the mind,  
Too great to pall, to sicken too refined ;  
Too soft for noise, and too sublime for art,  
The social solace of the feeling heart,  
For sloth too rapid, and for wit too high,  
'Tis VIRTUE'S pleasure, and can never die !

## THE LEARNING OF LOVE

[1776 ?]

Ah ! blest be the days when with Mira I took  
The learning of Love . . .

When we pluck'd the wild blossoms that  
blush'd in the grass,

And I taught my dear maid of their species  
and class ;

For Conway, the friend of mankind, had de-  
creed

That Hudson should show us the wealth of  
the mead.

## YE GENTLE GALES

Woodbridge, 1776.

Ye gentle Gales, that softly move,  
Go whisper to the Fair I love ;  
Tell her I languish and adore,  
And pity in return implore.

But if she's cold to my request,  
Ye louder Winds, proclaim the rest—  
My sighs, my tears, my griefs proclaim,  
And speak in strongest notes my flame.

Still if she rests in mute disdain,  
And thinks I feel a common pain—  
Wing'd with my woes, ye Tempests, fly,  
• And tell the haughty Fair I die.

## MIRA

*Aldborough, 1777.*

A WANTON chaos in my breast raged high,  
A wanton transport darted in mine eye;  
False pleasure urged, and ev'ry eager care,  
That swell the soul to guilt and to despair.  
My Mira came! be ever blest the hour,  
That drew my thoughts half way from folly's  
power;

She first my soul with loftier notions fired;  
I saw their truth, and as I saw admired;  
With greater force returning reason moved,  
And as returning reason urged, I loved;  
Till pain, reflection, hope, and love allied  
My bliss precarious to a surer guide—  
To Him who gives pain, reason, hope, and love,  
Each for that end that angels must approve.  
One beam of light He gave my mind to see,  
And gave that light, my heavenly fair, by  
thee;  
That beam shall raise my thoughts, and mend  
my strain,  
Nor shall my vows, nor prayers, nor verse be  
vain.

## HYMN

*Beebles, 1778.*

OH, Thou! who taught my infant eye  
To pierce the air, and view the sky,  
To see my God in earth and seas,  
To hear him in the vernal breeze,  
To know him midnight thoughts among,  
O guide my soul, and aid my song.

Spirit of Light! do thou impart  
Majestic truths, and teach my heart;  
Teach me to know how weak I am;  
How vain my powers, how poor my frame;  
Teach me celestial paths untrod—  
The ways of glory and of God.

No more let me, in vain surprise,  
To heathen art give up my eyes—  
To piles laborious science rear'd  
For heroes brave, or tyrants fear'd;  
But quit Philosophy, and see  
The Fountain of her works in Thee.

Fond man! yon glassy mirror eye—  
Go, pierce the flood, and there descry  
The miracles that float between  
The rainy leaves of wat'ry green;  
Old Ocean's hoary treasures scan;  
See nations swimming round a span.

Then wilt thou say—and rear no more  
Thy monuments in mystic lore—  
My God! I quit my vain design,  
And drop my work to gaze on Thine:  
Henceforth I'll frame myself to be,  
Oh, Lord! a monument of Thee.

## THE WISH

*Aldborough, 1778.*

GIVE me, ye Powers that rule in gentle hearts!  
The full design, complete in all its parts,  
Th' enthusiastic glow, that swells the soul—  
When swell'd too much, the judgment to  
control—

The happy ear that feels the flowing force  
Of the smooth line's uninterrupted course;  
Give me, oh give! if not in vain the prayer,  
That sacred wealth, poetic worth to share—  
Be it my boast to please and to improve,  
To warm the soul to virtue and to love;  
To paint the passions, and to teach mankind  
Our greatest pleasures are the most refined;  
The cheerful tale with fancy to rehearse,  
And gild the moral with the charm of verse.

## THE COMPARISON

*Parham, 1778.*

FRIENDSHIP is like the gold refined,  
And all may weigh its worth;  
Love like the ore, brought undesign'd  
In virgin beauty forth.

Friendship may pass from age to age,  
And yet remain the same;  
Love must in many a toil engage,  
And melt in lambent flame.

## GOLDSMITH TO THE AUTHOR

*'Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.'**Aldborough, 1778.*

YOU'RE in love with the Muses! Well, grant  
it be true,

When, good Sir, were the Muses enamour'd of  
you?

Read first,—if my lectures your fancy de-  
light,—

Your taste is diseased;—can your cure be  
to write?

You suppose you're a genius, that ought to  
engage  
The attention of wits, and the smiles of the  
age :  
Would the wits of the age their opinion make  
known,  
Why—every man thinks just the same of his  
own.  
You imagine that Pope—but yourself you  
beguile—  
Would have wrote the same things, had he  
chose the same style.  
Delude not yourself with so fruitless a hope,—  
Had he chose the same style, he had never  
been Pope.  
You think of my muse with a friendly regard,  
And rejoice in her author's esteem and re-  
ward :  
But let not his glory your spirits elate,  
When pleased with his honours, remember  
his fate.

### FRAGMENT

' Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful  
of him ? '

*Aldborough, 1778.*

PROUD, little Man, opinion's slave,  
Error's fond child, too duteous to be free,  
Say, from the cradle to the grave,  
Is not the earth thou tread'st too grand for  
thee ?  
This globe that turns thee, on her agile wheel  
Moves by deep springs, which thou canst never  
feel :  
Her day and night, her centre and her sun,  
Untraced by thee, their annual courses run.  
A busy fly, thou sharest the march divine,  
And flattering fancy calls the motion thine ;  
Untaught how soon some hanging grave may  
burst,  
And join thy flimsy substance to the dust.

### THE RESURRECTION

*Aldborough, 1778.*

The wintry winds have ceased to blow,  
And trembling leaves appear ;  
And fairest flowers succeed the snow,  
And hail the infant year.

So, when the world and all its woes  
Are vanish'd far away,  
Fair scenes and wonderful repose  
Shall bless the new-born day,—  
When, from the confines of the grave,  
The body too shall rise ;  
No more precarious passion's slave,  
Nor error's sacrifice.

'Tis but a sleep—and Sion's king  
Will call the many dead :  
'Tis but a sleep—and then we sing,  
O'er dreams of sorrow fled.

Yes !—wintry winds have ceased to blow,  
And trembling leaves appear,  
And Nature has her types to show  
Throughout the varying year.

### MY BIRTH-DAY

*Aldborough, Dec. 24, 1778.*

THROUGH a dull tract of woe, of dread,  
The toiling year has pass'd and fled :  
And, lo ! in sad and pensive strain,  
I sing my birth-day date again.

Trembling and poor, I saw the light,  
New waking from unconscious night :  
Trembling and poor I still remain  
To meet unconscious night again.

Time in my pathway strews few flowers,  
To cheer or cheat the weary hours ;  
And those few strangers, dear indeed,  
Are choked, are check'd, by many a weed.

### TO ELIZA

*Becces, 1779.*

THE Hebrew king, with spleen possess'd,  
By David's harp was soothed to rest ;  
Yet, when the magic song was o'er,  
The soft delusion charm'd no more :  
The former fury fired the brain,  
And every care return'd again.

But, had he known Eliza's skill  
To bless the sense and bind the will,  
To bid the gloom of care retire,  
And fan the flame of fond desire,  
Remembrance then had kept the strain,  
And not a care return'd again.

## LIFE

*Aldborough, 1779.*

THINK ye the joys that fill our early day,  
Are the poor prelude to some full repast?  
Think you they *promise*?—ah! believe they  
*pay*;

The purest ever, they are oft the last.  
The jovial swain that yokes the morning team,  
And all the verdure of the field enjoys,  
See him, how languid! when the noontide  
beam

Plays on his brow, and all his force destroys.  
So 'tis with us, when, love and pleasure fled,  
We at the summit of our hill arrive:—  
Lo! the gay lights of Youth are past—are  
dead,

But what still deepening clouds of Care  
survive!

## THE SACRAMENT

*Aldborough, 1779.*

O! SACRED gift of God to man,  
A faith that looks above,  
And sees the deep amazing plan  
Of sanctifying love.

Thou dear and yet tremendous God,  
Whose glory pride reviles;  
How did'st thou change thy awful rod  
To pard'ning grace and smiles!

Shut up with sin, with shame, below,  
I trust, this bondage past,  
A great, a glorious change to know,  
And to be bless'd at last.

I do believe, that, God of light!  
Thou didst to earth descend,  
With Satan and with Sin to fight—  
Our great, our only friend.

I know thou did'st ordain for me,  
Thy creature, bread and wine;  
The depth of grace I cannot see,  
But worship the design.

## NIGHT

*Aldborough, 1779.*

THE sober stillness of the night  
That fills the silent air,  
And all that breathes along the shore  
Invite to solemn prayer.

Vouchsafe to me that spirit, Lord!  
Which points the sacred way,  
And let thy creatures here below  
Instruct me how to pray.

FRAGMENT WRITTEN AT  
MIDNIGHT*Aldborough, 1779.*

Oh, great Apollo! by whose equal aid  
The verse is written, and the med'cine made;  
Shall thus a boaster, with his fourfold powers,  
In triumph scorn this sacred art of ours?  
Insulting quack! on thy sad business go,  
And land the stranger on this world of woe.

Still I pass on, and now before me find  
The restless ocean, emblem of my mind;  
There wave on wave, here thought on thought  
succeeds,

Their produce idle works, and idle weeds:  
Dark is the prospect o'er the rolling sea,  
But not more dark than my sad views to me;  
Yet from the rising moon the light beams  
dance

In troubled splendour o'er the wide expanse;  
So on my soul, whom cares and troubles fright,  
The Muse pours comfort in a flood of light.—  
Shine out, fair flood! until the day-star flings  
His brighter rays on all sublunar things.

'Why in such haste? by all the powers of  
wit,

I have against thee neither bond nor writ;  
If thou'rt a poet, now indulge the flight  
Of thy fine fancy in this dubious light;  
Cold, gloom, and silence shall assist thy  
rhyme,

And all things meet to form the true sub-  
lime.'—

'Shall I, preserver deem'd around the place,  
With abject rhymes a doctor's name disgrace?  
Nor doctor solely, in the healing art  
I'm all in all, and all in every part;  
Wise Scotland's boast let that diploma be  
Which gave me right to claim the golden fee:  
Praise, then, I claim, to skilful surgeon due,  
For mine th' advice and operation too;  
And, fearing all the vile compounding tribe,  
I make myself the med'cines I prescribe;  
Mine, too, the chemic art; and not a drop  
Goes to my patients from a vulgar shop.  
But chief my fame and fortune I command  
From the rare skill of this obstetric hand:

Thus our chaste dames and prudent wives  
allow,  
With her who calls me from thy wonder now.'

### A FAREWELL

[1779]

THE hour arrived ! I sigh'd and said,  
How soon the happiest hours are fled !  
On wings of down they lately flew,  
But then their moments pass'd with you ;  
And still with you could I but be,  
On downy wings they'd always flee.

Say, did you not, the way you went,  
Feel the soft balm of gay content ?  
Say, did you not all pleasures find,  
Of which you left so few behind ?  
I think you did : for well I know  
My parting prayer would make it so !

May she, I said, life's choicest goods partake ;  
Those, late in life, for nobler still forsake—  
The bliss of one, th' esteem'd of many live,  
With all that Friendship would, and all that  
Love can give !

### TIME

[1780]

' THE clock struck one ! we take no thought  
of Time,'

Wrapt up in night, and meditating rhyme :  
All big with vision, we despise the powers  
That vulgar beings link to days and hours ;  
Those vile, mechanic things, that rule our  
hearts,

And cut our lives in momentary parts.  
' That speech of Time was Wisdom's gift,'  
said Young :

Ah, Doctor ! better Time would hold his  
tongue :

What serves the clock ? ' To warn the care-  
less crew

How much in little space they have to do ;  
To bid the busy world resign their breath,  
And beat each moment a soft call for death—  
To give it, then, a tongue, was wise in man.'  
Support the assertion, Doctor, if you can :  
It tells the ruffian when his comrades wait ;  
It calls the duns to crowd my hapless gate ;  
It tells my heart the paralysing tale,  
Of hours to come, when Misery must prevail.

### THE CHOICE

[1780]

WHAT vulgar title thus salutes the eye,  
The schoolboy's first attempt at poesy ?  
The long-worn theme of every humbler Muse,  
For wits to scorn and nurses to peruse ;  
The dull description of a scribbler's brain,  
And sigh'd-for-wealth, for which he sighs in  
vain ;  
A glowing chart of fairy-land estate,  
Romantic scenes, and visions out of date,  
Clear skies, clear streams, soft banks, and  
sober bowers,  
Deceitful, whispering brooks, and wind-perfun-  
ing flowers ?

Not thus ! too long have I in fancy wove  
My slender webs of wealth, and peace, and  
love ;

Have dream'd of plenty, in the midst of want,  
And sought, by Hope, what Hope can never  
grant,  
Been fool'd by wishes, and still wish'd again,  
And loved the flattery, while I knew it vain !  
' Gain by the Muse !'—alas ! thou might'st  
as soon

Pluck gain (as Percy honour) from the moon ;  
As soon grow rich by ministerial nods,  
As soon divine by dreaming of the gods,  
As soon succeed by telling ladies truth,  
Or preaching moral documents to youth :  
To as much purpose, mortal ! thy desires,  
As Tully's flourishes to country squires ;  
As simple truth within St. James's state,  
Or the soft lute in shrill-tongued Billingsgate.  
' Gain by the Muse !' alas, preposterous hope !  
Who ever gam'd by poetry—but Pope ?  
And what art thou ? No St. John takes thy  
part ;

No potent Dean commends thy head or heart !  
What gain'st thou but the praises of the poor ?  
They bribe no milkman to thy lofty door,  
They wipe no scrawl from thy increasing score.  
What did the Muse, or Fame, for Dryden,  
say ?

What for poor Butler ? what for honest Gay ?  
For Thomson, what ? or what to Savage give ?  
Or how did Johnson—how did Otway live ?  
Like thee ! dependent on to-morrow's good,  
Their thin revenue never understood ;  
Like thee, elate at what thou canst not know ;  
Like thee, repining at each puny blow ;

Like thee they lived, each dream of Hope to mock,

Upon their wits—but with a larger stock.

No, if for food thy unambitious pray'r,  
With supple acts to supple minds repair;  
Learn of the base, in soft grimace to deal,  
And deck thee with the lively genteel;  
Or trim the wherry, or the flail invite,  
Draw teeth, or any viler thing but write.  
Writers, whom once th' astonish'd vulgar saw,  
Give nations language, and great cities law;  
Whom gods, they said—and surely gods—  
inspired,

Whom emperors honour'd, and the world  
admired—

Now common grown, they awe mankind no  
more,

But vassals are, who judges were before;  
Blockheads on wits their little talents waste,  
As files gnaw metal that they cannot taste:  
Though still some good, the trial may produce,  
To shape the useful to a nobler use.

Some few of these, a statue and a stone  
Has Fame decreed—but deals out bread to none.

Unhappy art! decreed thine owner's curse,  
Vile diagnostic of consumptive purse:

Members by bribes, and ministers by lies,  
Gamblers by luck, by courage soldiers rise:  
Beaux by the outside of their heads may win,  
And wily sergeants by the craft within:  
Who but the race, by Fancy's demon led,  
Starve by the means they use to gain their  
bread?

Oft have I read, and, reading, mourn'd the  
fate

Of garret-bard, and his unpitied mate;  
Of children stinted in their daily meal!—

The joke of wealthier wits, who could not feel;  
Portentous spoke that pity in my breast!

And pleaded self—who ever pleads the best:  
No! thank my stars, my misery's all my  
own,—

To friends—to family—to foes unknown:  
Who hates my verse, and dafns the mean  
design,

Shall wound no peace—shall grieve no heart  
but mine.

One trial past, let sober Reason speak:  
Here shall we rest, or shall we further seek?  
Rest here, if our relenting stars ordain  
A placid harbour from the stormy main:  
Or, that denied, the fond remembrance weep,  
And sink, forgotten, in the mighty deep.

## A HUMBLE INVOCATION

[1780]

WHEN summer's tribe, her rosy tribe, are fled,  
And drooping beauty mourns her blossoms  
shed,

Some humbler sweet may cheer the pensive  
swain,

And simpler beauties deck the withering plain.  
And thus when Verse her wintry prospect  
weeps,

When Pope is gone, and mighty Milton sleeps,  
When Gray in lofty lines has ceased to soar,  
And gentle Goldsmith charms the town no  
more,

An humbler Bard the widow'd Muse invites,  
Who led by hope and inclination writes:  
With half their art, he tries the soul to move,  
And swell the softer strain with themes of love.

## FROM AN EPISTLE TO MIRA

[1780]

OF substance I've thought, and the varied  
disputes

On the nature of man and the notions of  
brutes;

Of systems confuted, and systems explain'd,  
Of science disputed, and tenets maintain'd . . .  
These, and such speculations on these kind of  
things,

Have robb'd my poor Muse of her plume and  
her wings;

Consumed the phlogiston you used to admire,  
The spirit extracted, extinguish'd the fire;  
Let out all the ether, so pure and refined,  
And left but a mere *caput mortuum* behind.

## EPISTLE TO PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY

[1780]

Who thus aspiring sings? would'st thou ex-  
plore;

A Bard replies, who ne'er assumed before,—  
One taught in hard affliction's school to bear  
Life's ills, where every lesson costs a tear,  
Who sees from thence, the proper point of  
view,

What the wise heed not, and the weak pursue.



And now farewell, the drooping Muse ex-claims.

She lothly leaves thee to the shock of war,  
And, fondly dwelling on her princely tar,  
Wishes the noblest good her Harry's share,  
Without her misery and without her care.  
For, ah ! unknown to thee, a rueful train,  
Her hapless children, sigh, and sigh in vain ;  
A numerous band, denied the boon to die,  
Half-starved, half-fed by fits of charity.  
Unknown to thee ! and yet, perhaps, thy ear  
Has chanced each sad, amusing tale to hear,  
How some, like Budgell, madly sank for ease ;  
How some, like Savage, sicken'd by degrees ;  
How a pale crew, like helpless Otway, shed  
The proud big tear on song-extorted bread ;  
Or knew, like Goldsmith, some would stoop  
to choose

Contempt, and for the mortar quit the Muse.

One of this train—and of these wretches  
one—

Slaves to the Muses, and to Misery son—  
Now prays the Father of all Fates to shed,  
On Henry, laurels ; on his poet, bread !

Unhappy art ! decreed thine owner's  
curse ;

Vile diagnostic of consumptive purse ;  
Still shall thy fatal force my soul perplex,  
And every friend, and every brother vex !  
Each fond companion !—No, I thank my  
God !

There rests my torment—there is hung the  
rod.

To friend, to fame, to family unknown,  
Sour disappointments frown on me alone.  
Who hates my song, and damns the poor de-  
sign,

Shall wound no peace—shall grieve no heart  
but mine !

Pardon, sweet Prince ! the thoughts that  
will intrude,

For want is absent, and dejection rude.  
Methinks I hear, amid the shouts of Fame,  
Each jolly victor hail my Henry's name ;  
And, Heaven forbid that, in that jovial day,  
One British bard should grieve when all are  
gay.

No ! let him find his country has redress,  
And bid adieu to every fond distress ;  
Or, touch'd too near, from joyful scenes  
retire,

Scorn to complain, and with one sigh expire !

DRIFTING

[1780]

LIKE some poor bark on the rough ocean tost,  
My rudder broken, and my compass lost,  
My sails the coarsest, and too thin to last,  
Pelted by rains, and bare to many a blast,  
My anchor, Hope, scarce fix'd enough to stay  
Where the strong current Grief sweeps all  
away,

I sail along, unknowing how to steer,  
Where quicksands lie and frowning rocks  
appear.

Life's ocean teems with foes to my frail bark,  
The rapid sword-fish, and the rav'ning shark,  
Where torpid things crawl forth in splendid  
shell,

And knaves and fools and sycophants live well.  
What have I left in such tempestuous sea ?  
No Tritons shield, no Naiads shelter me !  
A gloomy Muse, in Mira's absence, hears  
My plaintive prayer, and sheds consoling  
tears—

Some fairer prospect, though at distance,  
brings,

Soothes me with song, and flatters as she sings.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL  
OF SHELBURNE

[1780]

AH ! SHELBURNE, blest with all that's good  
or great,

T' adorn a rich, or save a sinking state,  
If public Ills engross not all thy care,  
Let private Woe assail a patriot's ear,  
Pity confined, but not less warm, impart,  
And unresisted win thy noble heart :  
Nor deem I rob thy soul of Britain's share,  
Because I hope to have some interest there ;  
Still wilt thou shine on all a fostering sun,  
Though with more fav'ring beams enlight'n-  
ing one,—

As Heaven will oft make some more amply  
blest,

Yet still in general bounty feeds the rest.  
Oh hear the Virtue thou reverest plead ;  
She'll swell thy breast, and there applaud the  
deed.

She bids thy thoughts one hour from greatness  
stray,

And leads thee on to fame a shorter way ;

Where, if no withering laurel's thy reward,  
There's shouting Conscience, and a grateful  
Bard ;

A bard untrained in all but misery's school,  
Who never bribed a knave or praised a fool ;—  
'Tis Glory prompts, and as thou read'st  
attend,

She dictates pity, and becomes my friend ;  
She bids each cold and dull reflection flee,  
And yields her Shelburne to distress and  
me !—

### AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND

[1780]

WHY, true, thou say'st the fools at Court  
denied,  
Growl vengeance,—and then take the other  
side :

The unfed flatterer borrows satire's power,  
As sweets unshelter'd run to rapid sour.  
But thou, the counsel to my closest thought,  
Beheld'st it ne'er in fulsome stanzas wrought.  
The Muse I court ne'er fawn'd on venal souls,  
Whom suppliants angle, and poor praise con-  
trols ;

She, yet unskill'd in all but fancy's dream,  
Sang to the woods, and Mira was her theme.  
But when she sees a titled nothing stand  
The ready cipher of a trembling land,—  
Not of that simple kind that placed alone  
Are useless, harmless things, and threaten  
none,—

But those which, join'd to figures, well express  
A strengthen'd tribe that amplify distress,  
Grow in proportion to their number great,  
And help each other in the ranks of state ;—  
When this and more the pensive Muses see,  
They leave the vales and willing nymphs to  
thee ;

To Court on wings of agile anger speed,  
And paint to freedom's sons each guileful  
deed.

Hence rascals teach the virtues they detest,  
And fright base action from sin's wavering  
breast ;

For though the knave may scorn the Muse's  
arts,

Her sting may haply pierce more timid hearts.  
Some, though they wish it, are not steel'd  
enough,

Nor is each would-be villain conscience-proof.

And what, my friend, is left my song besides ?  
No school-day wealth that roll'd in silver  
tides,

No dreams of hope that won my early will,  
Nor love, that pam'd in temporary thrill ;  
No gold to deck my pleasure-scorn'd abode,  
No friend to whisper peace,—to give me  
food ;—

Poor to the World I'd yet not live in vain,  
But show its lords their hearts, and my dis-  
dain.

Yet shall not Satire all my song engage  
In indiscriminate and idle rage ;  
True praise, where Virtue prompts, shall gild  
each line,

And long—if Vanity deceives not—shine.  
For though in harsher strains, the strains of  
woe,

And unadorn'd, my heart-felt murmurs flow,  
Yet time shall be when this thine humbled  
friend

Shall to more lofty heights his notes extend.  
A Man—for other title were too poor—  
Such as 'twere almost virtue to adore,  
He shall the ill that loads my heart exhale,  
As the sun vapours from the dew-press'd vale ;  
Himself uninjuring shall new warmth infuse,  
And call to blossom every want-nipp'd Muse.  
Then shall my grateful strains his ear rejoice,  
His name harmonious thrill'd on Mira's voice ;  
Round the reviving bays new sweets shall  
spring,

And SHELBURNE'S fame through laughing  
valleys ring.

### THE CANDIDATE

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO THE AUTHORS OF  
THE 'MONTHLY REVIEW'

Multi quidem nobis facinus mala saepe  
poetae  
(Ut vineta egomet caedam mea) cum tibi  
librum

Sollicito damus, aut fesso, &c.

HOR. Epist. ii. 1.

AN INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS OF THE AUTHOR  
TO HIS POEMS.

YE idler things, that soothed my hours of  
care,

Where 'ould ye wander, triflers, tell me  
where ?

As maids neglected, do ye fondly dote,  
On the fair type, or the embroider'd coat ;  
Detest my modest shelf, and long to fly,  
Where princely POPES, and mighty MILTONS  
lie ?

Taught but to sing, and that in simple style,  
Of Lycia's lip, and Musidora's smile ;—  
Go then ! and taste a yet unfelt distress,  
The fear that guards the captivating press ;  
Whose maddening region should ye once  
explore,

No refuge yields my tongueless mansion more.  
But thus ye'll grieve, Ambition's plumage  
stript,

' Ah, would to Heaven, we'd died in manu-  
script ! '

Your unsoil'd page each yawning wit shall  
flee,

—For few will read, and none admire like  
me.—

Its place, where spiders silent hards enrohe,  
Squeezed betwixt Cibber's Odes and Black-  
more's Job ;

Where froth and mud, that varnish and de-  
form,

Feed the lean critic and the fattening worm ;  
Then sent disgraced—the unpaid printer's  
bane—

To mad Moorfields, or sober Chancery Lane,  
On dirty stalls I see your hopes expire,  
Vex'd by the grin of your unheeded sire,  
Who half reluctant has his care resign'd,  
Like a teased parent, and is rashly kind.

Yet rush not all, but let some scout go forth,  
View the strange land, and tell us of its worth ;  
And should he there barbarian usage meet,  
The patriot scrap shall warn us to retreat.

And thou, the first of thy eccentric race,  
A forward imp, go, search the dangerous place,  
Where Fame's eternal blossoms tempt each  
bard,

Though dragon-wits there keep eternal guard ;  
Hope not unhurt the golden spoil to seize,  
The Muses yield, as the Hesperides ;  
Who bribes the guardian, all his labour's  
done,

For every maid is willing to be won.

Before the lords of verse a suppliant stand,  
And beg our passage through the fairy land :  
Beg more—to search for sweets each blooming  
field,

And crop the blossoms, woods and valleys  
yield ;

To snatch the tints that beam on Fancy's  
bow ;

And feel the fires on Genius' wings that glow ;  
Praise without meanness, without flattery  
stoop,

Soothe without fear, and without trembling  
hope.

### TO THE READER

THE following Poem being itself of an  
introductory nature, its author supposes it  
can require but little preface.

It is published with a view of obtaining  
the opinion of the candid and judicious  
reader, on the merits of the writer, as a poet ;  
very few, he apprehends, being in such cases  
sufficiently impartial to decide for themselves.

It is addressed to the Authors of the  
*Monthly Review*, as to critics of acknowledged  
merit ; an acquaintance with whose labours  
has afforded the writer of the Epistle a reason  
for directing it to them in particular, and,  
he presumes, will yield to others a just and  
sufficient plea for the preference.

Familiar with disappointment, he shall not  
be much surprised to find he has mistaken his  
talent. However, if not egregiously the dupe  
of his vanity, he promises to his readers some  
entertainment, and is assured, that however  
little in the ensuing Poem is worthy of ap-  
plause, there is yet less that merits contempt.

### TO THE AUTHORS OF THE 'MONTHLY REVIEW'

THE pious pilot, whom the Gods provide,  
Through the rough seas the shatter'd bark to  
guide,

Trusts not alone his knowledge of the deep,  
Its rocks that threaten, and its sands that  
sleep ;

But, whilst with nicest skill he steers his way,  
The guardian Tritons hear their favourite  
pray.

Hence borne his vows to Neptune's coral  
dome,

The God relents, and shuts each gulfy tomb.

Thus as on fatal floods to fame I steer,  
I dread the storm, that ever rattles here,  
Nor think enough, that long my yielding soul  
Has felt the Muse's soft, but strong control,

Nor think enough that manly strength and  
ease,

Such as have pleased a friend,—will strangers  
please,

But, suppliant, to the critic's throne I bow,  
Here burn my incense, and here pay my vow ;  
That censure hush'd, may every blast give  
o'er,

And the lash'd coxcomb hiss contempt no  
more.

And ye, whom authors dread or dare in vain,  
Affecting modest hopes, or poor disdain,  
Receive a bard, who, neither mad nor mean,  
Despises each extreme, and sails between ;  
Who fears ; but has, amid his fears confers'd,  
The conscious virtue of a Muse oppress'd ;  
A Muse in changing times and stations nursed,  
By nature honour'd, and by fortune curs'd.

No servile strain of abject hope she brings,  
Nor soars presumptuous, with unwearied  
wings,

But, pruned for flight—the future all her  
care—

Would know her strength, and, if not strong,  
forbear.

The supple slave to regal pomp bows down,  
Prostrate to power, and cringing to a crown ;  
The bolder villain spurns a decent awe,  
Tramples on rule, and breaks through every  
law ;

But he whose soul on honest truth relies,  
Nor meanly flatters power, nor madly flies.  
Thus timid authors bear an abject mind,  
And plead for mercy they but seldom find.  
Some, as the desperate, to the halter run,  
Boldly deride the fate they cannot shun ;  
But such there are, whose minds, not taught  
to stoop,

Yet hope for fame, and dare avow their hope,  
Who neither brave the judges of their cause,  
Nor beg in soothing strains a brief applause.  
And such I'd be ;—and ere my fate is past,  
Ere clear'd with honour, or with culprits cast,  
Humbly at Learning's bar I'll state my case,  
And welcome then, distinction or disgrace !

When in the man the flights of fancy reign,  
Rule in the heart, or revel in the brain,  
As busy Thought her wild creation apes,  
And hangs delighted o'er her varying shapes,  
It asks a judgment, weighty and discreet,  
To know where wisdom prompts, and where  
conceit ;

Alike their draughts to every scribbler's mind

(Blind to their faults as to their danger  
blind) ;—

We write enraptured, and we write in haste,  
Dream idle dreams, and call them things of  
taste,

Improvement trace in every paltry line,  
And see, transported, every dull design ;  
Are seldom cautious, all advice detest,  
And ever think our own opinions best ;  
Nor shows my Muse a muse-like spirit here,  
Who bids me pause, before I persevere.

But she—who shrinks while meditating  
flight

In the wide way, whose bounds delude her  
sight,

Yet tired in her own mazes still to roam,  
And cull poor banquets for the soul at home,  
Would, ere she ventures, ponder on the  
way,

Lest dangers yet unthought-of flight betray ;  
Lest her Icarian wing, by wits unplumed,  
Be robb'd of all the honours she assumed ;  
And Dulness swell,—a black and dismal sea,  
Gaping her grave ; while censures madden me.

Such was his fate, who flew too near the sun,  
Shot far beyond his strength, and was undone ;  
Such is his fate, who creeping at the shore  
The billow sweeps him, and he's found no  
more.

Oh ! for some God, to bear my fortunes fair  
Midway betwixt presumption and despair !

'Has then some friendly critic's former  
blow

Taught thee a prudence authors seldom  
know ?'

Not so ! their anger and their love untried,  
A wo-taught prudence deigns to tend my  
side :

Life's hopes ill-spel'd, the Muse's hopes grow  
poor,

And though they flatter, yet they charm no  
more ;

Experience points where lurking dangers lay,  
And as I run, throws caution in my way.

There was a night, when wintry winds did  
rage,

Hard by a ruin'd pile, I met a sage ;  
Resembling him the time-struck place ap-  
pear'd,

Hollow its voice, and moss its spreading  
beard ;

Whose fate-lopp'd brow, the bat's and  
beetle's dome,

Shook, as the hunted owl flew hooting home.  
His breast was bronzed by many an eastern  
blast,

And fourscore winters seem'd he to have past,  
His thread-bare coat the supple osier bound,  
And with slow feet he press'd the sodden  
ground,

Where, as he heard the wild-wing'd Eurus  
blow,

He shook, from locks as white, December's  
snow ;

Inured to storm, his soul ne'er bid it cease,  
But lock'd within him meditated peace.

Father, I said—for silver hairs inspire,  
And oft I call the bending peasant Sire—  
Tell me, as here beneath this ivy bower,  
That works fantastic round its trembling  
tower,

We hear Heaven's guilt-alarms thunders  
roar,

Tell me the pains and pleasures of the poor ;  
For Hope, just spent, requires a sad adieu,  
And Fear acquaints me I shall live with you.

There was a time when, by Delusion led,  
A scene of sacred bliss around me spread,  
On Hope's, as Pisgah's lofty top, I stood,  
And saw my Canaan there, my promised good ;  
A thousand scenes of joy the clime bestow'd,  
And wine and oil through vision's valley  
flow'd ;

As Moses his, I call'd my prospect bless'd,  
And gazed upon the good I ne'er possess'd :  
On this side Jordan doom'd by fate to stand,  
Whilst happier Joshuas win the promised land.  
' Son,' said the Sage—' be this thy care sup-  
press'd ;

The state the Gods shall choose thee is the  
best :

Rich if thou art, they ask thy praises more,  
And would thy patience when they make thee  
poor ;

But other thoughts within thy bosom reign,  
And other subjects vex thy busy brain,  
Poetic wreaths thy vainer dreams excite,  
And thy sad stars have destined thee to write :  
Then since that task the ruthless fates decree,  
Take a few precepts from the Gods and me !

' Be not too eager in the arduous chase ;  
Who pants for triumph seldom wins the race :  
Venture not all, but wisely hoard thy worth,  
And let thy labours one by one go forth :  
Some happier scrap capricious wits may find  
On a fair day, and be profusely kind ;

Which, buried in the rubbish of a throng,  
Had pleased as little as a new-year's song,  
Or lover's verse, that cloy'd with nauseous  
sweet,

Or birthday ode, that ran on ill-pair'd feet.  
Merit not always—Fortune feeds the bard,  
And as the whim inclines bestows reward :  
None without wit, nor with it numbers gain ;  
To please is hard, but none shall please in  
vain :

As a coy mistress is the humour'd town,  
Loth every lover with success to crown ;  
He who would win must every effort try,  
Sail in the mode, and to the fashion fly ;  
Must gay or grave to every humour dress,  
And watch the lucky Moment of Success ;  
That caught, no more his eager hopes are  
cross'd ;

But vain are Wit and Love, when that is lost.'

Thus said the God ; for now a God he grew,  
His white locks changing to a golden hue,  
And from his shoulders hung a mantle azure-  
blue.

His softening eyes the winning charm dis-  
closed

Of dove-like Delia when her doubts reposed ;  
Mira's alone a softer lustre bear,  
When wo beguiles them of an angel's tear ;  
Beauteous and young the smiling phantom  
stood,

Then sought on airy wing his blest abode.

Ah ! truth, distasteful in poetic theme,  
Why is the Muse compell'd to own her dream ?  
Whilst forward wits had sworn to every line,  
I only wish to make its moral mine.

Say then, O ye who tell how authors speed,  
May Hope indulge her flight, and I succeed ?  
Say, shall my name, to future song prefix'd,  
Be with the meanest of the tuneful mix'd ?  
Shall my soft strains the modest maid engage,  
My graver numbers move the silver'd sage,  
My tender themes delight the lover's heart,  
And comfort to the poor my solemn songs  
impart ?

For Oh ! thou Hope's, thou Thought's  
eternal King,  
Who gav'st them power to charm, and me to  
sing—

Chief to thy praise my willing numbers soar,  
And in my happier transports I adore ;  
Mercy ! thy softest attribute proclaim,  
Thyself in abstract, thy more lovely name ;  
That flings o'er all my grief a cheering ray,

As the full moon-beam gilds the watery way.  
And then too, Love, my soul's resistless lord,  
Shall many a gentle, generous strain afford,  
To all the soil of sooty passions blind,  
Pure as embracing angels, and as kind ;  
Our Mira's name in future times shall shine,  
And—though the harshest—Shepherds envy mine.

Then let me, (pleasing task !) however hard,

Join, as of old, the prophet and the bard ;  
If not, ah ! shield me from the dire disgrace,  
That haunts the wild and visionary race ;  
Let me not draw my lengthen'd lines along,  
And tire in untam'd infamy of song,  
Lest, in some dismal Dunciad's future page,  
I stand the CIBBER of this tuneless age ;  
Lest, if another POPE th' indulgent skies  
Should give, inspired by all their deities,  
My luckless name, in his immortal strain,  
Should, blasted, brand me as a second Cain ;  
Doom'd in that song to live against my will,  
Whom all must scorn, and yet whom none could kill.

The youth, resisted by the maiden's art,  
Persists, and time subdues her kindling heart ;  
To strong entreaty yields the widow's vow,  
As mighty walls to bold besiegers bow ;  
Repeated prayers draw bounty from the sky,  
And heaven is won by importunity ;  
Ours, a projecting tribe, pursue in vain,  
In tedious trials, an uncertain gain ;  
Madly plunge on through every hope's defeat,  
And with our ruin only, find the cheat.

And why then seek that luckless doom to share ?

Who, I ?—To shun it is my only care.

I grant it true, that others better tell  
Of mighty WOLFE, who conquer'd as he fell ;<sup>1</sup>  
Of heroes born, their threaten'd realms to save,

Whom Fame anoints, and Envy tends whose grave ;

Of crimson'd fields, where Fate, in dire array,  
Gives to the breathless short-breathing clay ;

Ours, a young train, by humbler fountains dream,

<sup>1</sup> Scribner's Vario fortis, et hostium  
Victor, Maeconi carminis alite,  
Quam rem cumque feroc navibus, aut equis  
Miles, te dūce, gesserit, &c., &c.  
Hor. Od. Lib. I. 6,

Nor taste presumptuous the Pierian stream ;  
When Rodney's triumph comes on eagle-wing,  
We hail the victor, whom we fear to sing ;  
Nor tell we how each hostile chief goes on,  
The luckless Lee, or wary Washington ;  
How Spanish bombast blusters—they were  
beat,

And French politeness dulcifies—defeat.

My modest Muse forbears to speak of kings,  
Lest fainting stanzas blast the name she sings ;  
For who—the tenant of the beechen shade,  
Dares the big thought, in regal breasts per-  
vade ?

Or search his soul, whom each too-favouring God

Gives to delight in plunder, pomp, and blood ?  
No ; let me, free from Cupid's frolic round,  
Rejoice, or more rejoice by Cupid bound :  
Of laughing girls in smiling couplets tell,  
And paint the dark-brow'd grove, where  
wood-nymphs dwell ;

Who bid invading youths their vengeance feel,  
And pierce the votive hearts they mean to heal.

Such were the themes I knew in school-day ease,

When first the moral magic learn'd to please,  
Ere Judgment told how transports warm'd  
the breast,

Transported Fancy there her stores imprest ;  
The soul in varied raptures learn'd to fly,  
Felt all their force, and never question'd  
why ;

No idle doubts could then her peace molest,  
She found delight, and left to heaven the rest ;  
Soft joys in Evening's placid shades were  
born ;

And where sweet fragrance wing'd the balmy  
morn,

When the wild thought roved vision's circuit  
o'er,

And caught the raptures, caught, alas ! no  
more :

No care did then a dull attention ask,  
For study pleased, and that was every task ;  
No guilty dreams stalk'd that heaven-favour'd  
round,

Heaven-guarded too, no Envy entrance found ;  
Nor numerous wants, that vex advancing age,  
Nor Flattery's silver'd tale, nor Sorrow's sage ;  
Frugal Affliction kept each growing dart,  
T' o'erwhelm in future days the bleeding heart  
No sceptic art veil'd Pride in Truth's disguise,

But prayer unsoil'd of doubt besieged the  
skies ;

Ambition, avarice, care to man retired,  
Nor came desires more quick, than joys de-  
sired.

A summer morn there was, and passing fair,  
Still with the breeze, and health perfum'd the  
air ;

The glowing east in crimson'd splendour shone,  
What time the eye just marks the pallid moon,  
V'let-wing'd Zephyr fann'd each opening  
flower,

And brush'd from fragrant cups the limpid  
shower ;

A distant huntsman fill'd his cheerful horn,  
The vivid dew hung trembling on the thorn,  
And mists, like creeping rocks, arose to meet  
the morn.

Huge giant shadows spread along the plain,  
Or shot from towering rocks o'er half the main,  
There to the slumbering bark the gentle tide  
Stole soft, and faintly beat against its side ;  
Such is that sound, which fond designs convey,  
When, true to love, the damsel speeds away ;  
The sails unshaken, hung aloft unfurl'd,  
And simpering nigh, the languid current  
curl'd ;

A crumbling ruin, once a city's pride,  
The well-pleas'd eye through withering oaks  
descried,

Where Sadness, gazing on time's ravage,  
hung,

And Silence to Destruction's trophy clung—  
Save that as morning songsters swell'd their  
lays,

Awaken'd Echo humm'd repeated praise :  
The lark on quavering pinion woo'd the day,  
Less towering linnets fill'd the vocal spray,  
And song-invited pilgrims rose to pray.

Here at a pine-crest hill's embroider'd base  
I stood, and hail'd the Genius of the place.

Then was it doom'd by fate, my idle heart,  
Soft'n'd by Nature, gave access to Art ;

The Muse approach'd, her syren-song I heard,  
Her magic felt, and all her charms revered :

E'er since she rules in absolute control,  
And Mira only dearer to my soul.

Ah ! tell me not these empty joys to fly,  
If they deceive, I would deluded die ;

To the fond themes my heart so early wed,  
So soon in life to blooming visions led,  
So prone to run the vague uncertain course,

'Tis more than death to think of a divorce.

What wills the poet of the favouring gods,  
Led to their shrine, and blest in their abodes ?<sup>1</sup>

What when he fills the glass, and to each youth  
Names his loved maid, and glories in his truth ?

Not India's spoils, the splendid nabob's pride,  
Not the full trade of Hermes' own Cheapside,

Nor gold itself, nor all the Ganges laves,  
Or shrouds, well shrouded in his sacred waves ;

Nor gorgeous vessels deck'd in trim array,  
Which the more noble Thames bears far away ;

Let those whose nod makes sooty subjects flee,  
Hack with blunt steel the savory calipee ;

Let those whose ill-used wealth their country  
fly,

Virtue-scorn'd wines from hostile France to  
buy ;

Favour'd by fate, let such in joy appear,  
Their smuggled cargoes landed thrice a year ;

Disdaining these, for simpler food I'll look,  
And crop my beverage at the mantled brook.

O Virtue ! brighter than the noon-tide ray,  
My humble prayers with sacred joys repay !

Health to my limbs may the kind Gods impart,  
And thy fair form delight my yielding heart !

Grant me to shun each vile inglorious road,  
To see thy way, and trace each moral good :

If more—let Wisdom's sons my page peruse,  
And decent credit deck my modest Muse.

Nor deem it pride that prophesies, my song  
Shall please the sons of taste, and please them  
long.

Say ye ! to whom my Muse submissive brings  
Her first-fruit offering, and on trembling wings,

May she not hope in future days to soar,  
Where fancy's sons have led the way before ?

Where genius strives in each ambrosial bower  
To snatch with agile hand the opening flower ?

To cull what sweets adorn the mountain's  
brow,

What Rumbler blossoms crown the vales be-  
low ?

To blend with these the stores by art refined,  
And give the moral Flora to the mind ?

Far other scenes my timid hour admits,  
Relentless critics, and avenging wits ;

E'en coxcombs take a licence from their pen,  
And to each ' let-him-perish ' cry Amen !

And thus, with wits or fools my heart shall cry,  
For if they please not, let the trifles die :

<sup>1</sup> Quid dedicatum poscit Apollinem  
Vates ? quid orat, de patera novum  
Fundens liquorem ? &c., &c.

HOR. *Carm. Lib. i. xxxi.*

Die, and be lost in dark oblivion's shore,  
And never rise to vex their author more.

I would not dream o'er some soft liquid line,  
Amid a thousand blunders form'd to shine ;  
Yet rather this, than that dull scribbler be,  
From every fault, and every beauty free,  
Curst with tame thoughts and mediocrity.  
Some have I found so thick beset with spots,  
'Twas hard to trace their beauties through  
their blots ;

And these, as tapers round a sick-man's room,  
Or passing chimes, but warn'd me of the tomb !

O ! if you blast, at once consume my bays,  
And damn me not with mutilated praise.

With candour judge ; and, a young bard in  
view,

Allow for that, and judge with kindness too ;  
Faults he must own, though hard for him to  
find,

Not to some happier merits quite so blind ;

These if mistaken Fancy only sees,

Or Hope, that takes Deformity for these:

If Dunce, the crowd-befitting title, falls,

His lot, and Dulness her new subject calls,—

To the poor bard alone your censures give—

Let his fame die, but let his honour live ;

Laugh if you must—be candid as you can,

And when you lash the Poet, spare the Man.



## DEDICATION AND PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1807

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY-RICHARD FOX,  
LORD HOLLAND,

OF HOLLAND, IN LINCOLNSHIRE; LORD HOLLAND, OF FOXLEY;  
AND FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.

MY LORD,—That the longest poem in this collection was honoured by the notice of your Lordship's right honourable and ever-valued relation, Mr. Fox; that it should be the last which engaged his attention; and that some parts of it were marked with his approbation; are circumstances productive of better hopes of ultimate success than I had dared to entertain before I was gratified with a knowledge of them: and the hope thus raised leads me to ask permission that I may dedicate this book to your Lordship, to whom that truly great and greatly lamented personage was so nearly allied in family, so closely bound in affection, and in whose mind presides the same critical taste which he exerted to the delight of all who heard him. He doubtless united with his unequalled abilities a fund of good-nature; and this possibly led him to speak favourably of, and give satisfaction to writers, with whose productions he might not be entirely satisfied: nor must I allow myself to suppose his desire of obliging was withholden, when he honoured any effort of mine with his approbation: but, my Lord, as there was discrimination in the opinion he gave; as he did not veil indifference for insipid mediocrity of composition under any general expression of cool approval; I allow myself to draw a favourable conclusion from the verdict of one who had the superiority of intellect few would dispute, which he made manifest by a force of eloquence peculiar to himself; whose excellent judgment no one of

his friends found cause to distrust, and whose acknowledged candour no enemy had the temerity to deny.

With such encouragement, I present my book to your Lordship: the Account of the *Life and Writings of Lopez de Vega* has taught me what I am to expect; I there perceive how your Lordship can write, and am there taught how you can judge of writers: my faults, however numerous, I know will none of them escape through inattention, nor will any merit be lost for want of discernment: my verses are before him who has written elegantly, who has judged with accuracy, and who has given unequivocal proof of abilities in a work of difficulty;—a translation of poetry, which few persons in this kingdom are able to read, and in the estimation of talents not hitherto justly appreciated. In this view, I cannot but feel some apprehension: but I know also, that your Lordship is apprised of the great difficulty of writing well; that you will make much allowance for failures, if not too frequently repeated; and, as you can accurately discern, so you will readily approve, all the better and more happy efforts of one, who places the highest value upon your Lordship's approbation, and who has the honour to be,

MY LORD,  
Your Lordship's most faithful  
and obliged humble servant,  
GEO. CRABBE.

## PREFACE

ABOUT twenty-five years since was published a poem called *The Library*; which, in no long time, was followed by two others, *The Village*, and *The Newspaper*: these, with a few alterations and additions, are here reprinted; and are accompanied by a poem of greater length, and several shorter attempts, now, for the first time, before the public; whose reception of them creates in their author something more than common solicitude, because he conceives that, with the judgment to be formed of these latter productions, upon whatever may be found intrinsically meritorious or defective, there will be united an inquiry into the relative degree of praise or blame which they may be thought to deserve, when compared with the more early attempts of the same writer.

And certainly, were it the principal employment of a man's life to compose verses, it might seem reasonable to expect that he would continue to improve as long as he continued to live; though, even then, there is some doubt whether such improvement would follow, and perhaps proof might be adduced to show it would not: but when, to this 'idle trade,' is added some 'calling,' with superior claims upon his time and attention, his progress in the art of versification will probably be in proportion neither to the years he has lived, nor even to the attempts he has made.

While composing the first-published of these poems, the author was honoured with the notice and assisted by the advice of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke: part of it was written in his presence, and the whole submitted to his judgment; receiving, in its progress, the benefit of his correction: I hope, therefore, to obtain pardon of the reader, if I eagerly seize the occasion, and, after so long a silence, endeavour to express a grateful sense of the benefits I have received from this gentleman, who was solicitous for my more essential interests, as well as benevolently anxious for my credit as a writer.

I will not enter upon the subject of his

extraordinary abilities; it would be vanity, it would be weakness in me to believe that I could make them better known or more admired than they now are: but of his private worth, of his wishes to do good, of his affability and condescension; his readiness to lend assistance when he knew it was wanted, and his delight to give praise where he thought it was deserved; of these I may write with some propriety. All know that his powers were vast, his acquirements various; and I take leave to add, that he applied them with unremitting attention to those objects which he believed tended to the honour and welfare of his country. But it may not be so generally understood that he was ever assiduous in the more private duties of a benevolent nature, that he delighted to give encouragement to any promise of ability, and assistance to any appearance of desert: to what purposes he employed his pen, and with what eloquence he spake in the senate, will be told by many, who yet may be ignorant of the solid instruction, as well as the fascinating pleasantries, found in his common conversation, amongst his friends, and his affectionate manners, amiable disposition, and zeal for their happiness, which he manifested in the hours of retirement with his family.

To this gentleman I was indebted for my knowledge of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was as well known to his friends for his perpetual fund of good-humour and his unceasing wishes to oblige, as he was to the public for the extraordinary productions of his pencil and his pen. By him I was favoured with an introduction to Doctor Johnson, who honoured me with his notice, and assisted me, as Mr. Boswell has told, with remarks and emendations for a poem I was about to publish.<sup>1</sup> The doctor had been often wearied by applications, and did not readily comply with requests for his opinion; not from any unwillingness to oblige, but from a painful

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of S. Johnson*, by Boswell, vol. iv. p. 185, octavo edition.

contention in his mind, between a desire of giving pleasure and a determination to speak truth. No man can, I think, publish a work without some expectation of satisfying those who are to judge of its merit: but I can, with the utmost regard to veracity, speak my fears, as predominating over every pre-indulged thought of a more favourable nature, when I was told that a judge so discerning had consented to read and give his opinion of *The Village*, the poem I had prepared for publication. The time of suspense was not long protracted; I was soon favoured with a few words from Sir Joshua, who observed,—‘If I knew how cautious Doctor Johnson was in giving commendation, I should be well satisfied with the portion dealt to me in his letter.’—Of that letter the following is a copy:

‘Sir,

‘I have sent you back Mr. Crabbe’s poem; which I read with great delight. It is original, vigorous, and elegant. The alterations which I have made, I do not require him to adopt: for my lines are, perhaps, not often better [than] his own: but he may take mine and his own together, and perhaps, between them, produce something better than either.—He is not to think his copy wantonly defaced: a wet sponge will wash all the red lines away, and leave the pages clean.—His Dedication<sup>1</sup> will be least liked: it were better to contract it into a short sprightly address.—I do not doubt of Mr. Crabbe’s success.

‘I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

• ‘SAM. JOHNSON.’

‘March 4, 1783.’

That I was fully satisfied, my readers will do me the justice to believe; and I hope they will pardon me, if there should appear to them any impropriety in publishing the favourable opinion expressed in a private

<sup>1</sup> Neither of these were adopted: the author had written, about that time, some verses to the memory of Lord Robert Manners, brother to the late Duke of Rutland; and these, by a junction, it is presumed, not forced or unnatural, form the concluding part of *The Village*.

letter: they will judge, and truly, that by so doing, I wish to bespeak their good opinion, but have no design of extorting their applause. I would not hazard an appearance so ostentatious to gratify my vanity, but I venture to do it in compliance with my fears.

After these was published *The Newspaper*: it had not the advantage of such previous criticism from any friends, nor perhaps so much of my own attention as I ought to have given to it; but the impression was disposed of, and I will not pay so little respect to the judgment of my readers as now to suppress what they then approved.

Since the publication of this poem more than twenty years have elapsed, and I am not without apprehension, lest so long a silence should be construed into a blamable neglect of my own interest, which those excellent friends were desirous of promoting; or, what is yet worse, into a want of gratitude for their assistance; since it becomes me to suppose, they considered these first attempts as promises of better things, and their favours as stimulants to future exertion. And here, be the construction put upon my apparent negligence what it may, let me not suppress my testimony to the liberality of those who are looked up to, as patrons and encouragers of literary merit, or indeed of merit of any kind: their patronage has never been refused, I conceive, when it has been reasonably expected or modestly required; and it would be difficult, probably, to instance, in these times and in this country, any one who merited or was supposed to merit assistance, but who nevertheless languished in obscurity or necessity for want of it; unless in those cases where it was prevented by the resolution of impatient pride, or wearied by the solicitations of determined profligacy. And while the subject is before me, I am unwilling to pass silently over the debt of gratitude which I owe to the memory of two deceased noblemen, His Grace the late Duke of Rutland, and the Right Honourable the Lord Thurlow: sensible of the honour done me by their notice, and the benefits received from them, I trust this acknowledgment will be imputed to its only motive, a grateful sense of their favours.

Upon this subject I could dwell with much pleasure; but, to give a reason for that

appearance of neglect, as it is more difficult so, happily, it is less required. In truth, I have, for many years, intended a republication of these poems, as soon as I should be able to join with them such other of later date as might not deprive me of the little credit the former had obtained. Long indeed has this purpose been procrastinated: and if the duties of a profession, not before pressing upon me; if the claims of a situation, at that time untried; if diffidence of my own judgment, and the loss of my earliest friends, will not sufficiently account for my delay, I must rely upon the good-nature of my reader, that he will let them avail as far as he can, and find an additional apology in my fears of his censure.

These fears being so prevalent with me, I determined not to publish any thing more, unless I could first obtain the sanction of such an opinion as I might with some confidence rely upon. I looked for a friend who, having the discerning taste of Mr. Burke, and the critical sagacity of Doctor Johnson, would bestow upon my MS. the attention requisite to form his opinion, and would then favour me with the result of his observations: and it was my singular good fortune to gain such assistance; the opinion of a critic so qualified, and a friend so disposed to favour me. I had been honoured by an introduction to the Right Honourable Charles-James Fox some years before, at the seat of Mr. Burke; and being again with him, I received a promise that he would peruse any work I might send to him previous to its publication, and would give me his opinion; at that time, I did not think myself sufficiently prepared; and when, afterwards, I had collected some poems for his inspection, I found my right honourable friend engaged by the affairs of a great empire, and struggling with the inveteracy of a fatal disease; as such time, upon such mind, ever disposed to oblige as that mind was, I could not obtrude the petty business of criticising verses: but he remembered the promise he had kindly given, and repeated an offer, which, though I had not presumed to expect, I was happy to receive. A copy of the poems, now first published, was immediately sent to him, and (as I have the information from Lord Holland, and his Lordship's permission to inform my

readers) the poem which I have named *The Parish Register* was heard by Mr. Fox, and it excited interest enough, by some of its parts, to gain for me the benefit of his judgment upon the whole. Whatever he approved, the reader will readily believe, I have carefully retained; the parts he disliked are totally expunged, and others are substituted, which I hope resemble those, more conformable to the taste of so admirable a judge. Nor can I deny myself the melancholy satisfaction of adding, that these poems (and more especially the story of Phoebe Dawson, with some parts of the second book) were the last compositions of their kind that engaged and amused the capacious, the candid, the benevolent mind of this great man.

The above information I owe to the favour of the Right Honourable Lord Holland; nor this only, but to his Lordship I am indebted for some excellent remarks upon the other parts of my MS. It was not indeed my good fortune then to know that my verses were in the hands of a nobleman who had given proof of his accurate judgment as a critic, and his elegance as a writer, by favouring the public with an easy and spirited translation of some interesting scenes of a dramatic poet, not often read in this kingdom. The *Life of Lopez de Vega* was then unknown to me; I had, in common with many English readers, heard of him, but could not judge whether his far-extended reputation was caused by the sublime efforts of a mighty genius, or the unequalled facility of a rapid composer, aided by peculiar and fortunate circumstances. That any part of my MS. was honoured by the remarks of Lord Holland yields me a high degree of satisfaction, and his Lordship will perceive the use I have made of them; but I must feel some regret when I know to what small portion they were limited; and discerning, as I do, the taste and judgment bestowed upon the verses of Lopez de Vega, I must perceive how much my own needed the assistance afforded to one, who cannot be sensible of the benefit he has received.

But how much soever I may lament the advantages lost, let me remember with gratitude the helps I have obtained. With a single exception, every poem in the ensuing collection has been submitted to the critical

sagacity of a gentleman, upon whose skill and candour their author could rely. To publish by advice of friends has been severely ridiculed, and that too by a poet, who probably, without such advice, never made public any verses of his own: in fact, it may not be easily determined who acts with less discretion, the writer who is encouraged to publish his works, merely by the advice of friends whom he consulted, or he who, against advice, publishes from the sole encouragement of his own opinion. These are deceptions to be carefully avoided, and I was happy to escape the latter, by the friendly attentions of the Reverend Richard Turner, minister of Great Yarmouth. To this gentleman I am indebted more than I am able to describe, or than he is willing to allow, for the time he has bestowed upon the attempts I have made. He is, indeed, the kind of critic for whom every poet should devoutly wish, and the friend whom every man would be happy to acquire; he has taste to discern all that is meritorious, and sagacity to detect whatsoever should be discarded; he gives just the opinion an author's wisdom should covet, however his vanity might prompt him to reject it; what altogether to expunge and what to improve he has repeatedly taught me, and, could I have obeyed him in the latter direction, as I invariably have in the former, the public would have found this collection more worthy its attention, and I should have sought the opinion of the critic more void of apprehension.

But whatever I may hope or fear, whatever assistance I have had or have needed, it becomes me to leave my verses to the judgment of the reader, without my endeavour to point out their merit, or an apology for their defects: yet as, among the poetical attempts of one who has been for many years a priest, it may seem a want of respect for the legitimate objects of his study, that nothing occurs, unless it be incidentally, of the great subjects of religion; so it may appear a kind of ingratitude of a benefited clergyman, that he has not employed his talent (be it estimated as it may) to some patriotic purpose; as in celebrating the unsubdued spirit of his countrymen in their glorious resistance of those enemies, who would have no peace throughout the world,

except that which is dictated to the drooping spirit of suffering humanity by the triumphant insolence of military success.

Credit will be given to me, I hope, when I affirm that subjects so interesting have the due weight with me, which the sacred nature of the one, and the national importance of the other, must impress upon every mind not seduced into carelessness for religion by the lethargic influence of a perverted philosophy, nor into indifference for the cause of our country by hyperbolic or hypocritical professions of universal philanthropy: but, after many efforts to satisfy myself by various trials on these subjects, I declined all further attempt, from a conviction that I should not be able to give satisfaction to my readers. Poetry of religious nature must indeed ever be clogged with almost insuperable difficulty: but there are doubtless to be found poets who are well qualified to celebrate the unanimous and heroic spirit of our countrymen, and to describe in appropriate colours some of those extraordinary scenes, which have been and are shifting in the face of Europe, with such dreadful celerity; and to such I relinquish the duty.

It remains for me to give the reader a brief view of those articles in the following collection, which for the first time solicit his attention.

In the *Parish Register*, he will find an endeavour once more to describe village-manners, not by adopting the notion of pastoral simplicity or assuming ideas of rustic barbarity, but by more natural views of the peasantry, considered as a mixed body of persons, sober or profligate, and hence, in a great measure, contented or miserable. To this more general description are added the various characters which occur in the three parts of a Register; Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials.

If the *Birth of Flattery* offer no moral, as an appendage to the fable, it is hoped that nothing of an immoral, nothing of improper tendency will be imputed to a piece of poetical playfulness; in fact, genuine praise, like all other species of truth, is known by its bearing full investigation: It is what the giver is happy that he can justly bestow, and the receiver conscious that he may boldly accept; but adulation must ever be afraid of inquiry,

and must, in proportion to their degrees of moral sensibility,

Be shame 'to him that gives and him that takes.'

The verses in page 87 want a title; nor does the motto, although it gave occasion to them, altogether express the sense of the writer, who meant to observe that some of our best acquisitions, and some of our nobler conquests, are rendered ineffectual, by the passing away of opportunity, and the changes made by time; an argument that such acquirements and moral habits are reserved for a state of being in which they have the uses here denied them.

In the story of *Sir Eustace Grey*, an attempt is made to describe the wanderings of a mind first irritated by the consequences of error and misfortune, and afterwards soothed by a species of enthusiastic conversion, still keeping him insane; a task very difficult and, if the presumption of the attempt may find pardon, it will not be refused to the failure of the poet. It is said of our Shakspeare, respecting madness,

'In that circle none dare walk but he:—

yet be it granted to one, who dares not to pass the boundary fixed for common minds, at least to step near to the tremendous verge, and form some idea of the terrors that are stalking in the interdicted space.

When first I had written *Aaron, or The Gipsy*, I had no unfavourable opinion of it; and had I been collecting my verses at that time for publication, I should certainly have included this tale. Nine years have since elapsed, and I continue to judge the same of it, thus literally obeying one of the directions given by the prudence of criticism to the eagerness of the poet: but how far I may have conformed to rules of more importance

must be left to the less partial judgment of the readers.

The concluding poem, entitled *Woman!* was written at the time when the quotation from Mr. Ledyard was first made public; the expression has since become hackneyed; but the sentiment is congenial with our feelings, and though somewhat amplified in these verses, it is hoped they are not so far extended as to become tedious.

After this brief account of his subjects, the author leaves them to their fate, not presuming to make any remarks upon the kinds of versification he has chosen, or the merit of the execution: he has indeed brought forward the favourable opinion of his friends, and for that he earnestly hopes his motives will be rightly understood; it was a step of which he felt the advantage while he foresaw the danger: he was aware of the benefit, if his readers would consider him as one who puts on a defensive armour against hasty and determined severity; but he feels also the hazard, lest they should suppose he looks upon himself to be guarded by his friends, and so secure in the defence, that he may defy the fair judgment of legal criticism. It will probably be said, 'he has brought with him his testimonials to the bar of the public;' and he must admit the truth of the remark: but he begs leave to observe in reply, that, of those who bear testimonials of any kind, the greater numbers feel apprehension, and not security; they are indeed so far from the enjoyment of victory, of the exultation of triumph, that with all they can do for themselves, with all their friends have done for them, they are, like him, in dread of examination, and in fear of disappointment.

*Muston, Leicestershire,  
September, 1807.*

# THE LIBRARY

[1781]

Books afford Consolation to the troubled Mind, by substituting a lighter Kind of Distress for its own.—They are productive of other Advantages :—An Author's Hope of being known in distant Times—Arrangement of the Library—Size and Form of the Volumes—The ancient Folio, clasped and chained—Fashion prevalent even in this Place—The Mode of publishing in Numbers, Pamphlets, &c.—Subjects of the different Classes—Divinity—Controversy—The Friends of Religion often more dangerous than her Foes—Sceptical Authors—Reason too much rejected by the former Converts ; exclusively relied upon by the latter—Philosophy ascending through the Scale of Being to moral Subjects—Books of Medicine : their Variety, Variance, and Proneness to System : the Evil of this and the Difficulty it causes—Farewell to this Study—Law : the increasing Number of its Volumes—Supposed happy State of Man without Laws—Progress of Society—Historians : their Subjects—Dramatic Authors, Tragic and Comic—Ancient Romances—The Captive Heroine—Happiness in the Perusal of such Books : why—Criticism—Apprehensions of the Author removed by the Appearance of the Genius of the Place ; whose Reasoning and Admonition conclude the Subject.

WHEN the sad soul, by care and grief oppress'd,  
Looks round the world, but looks in vain for rest ;  
When every object that appears in view,  
Partakes her gloom and seems dejected too ;  
Where shall affliction from itself retire ?  
Where fade away and placidly expire ?  
Alas ! we fly to silent scenes in vain ;  
Care blasts the honours of the flow'ry plain :  
Care veils in clouds the sun's meridian beam,  
Sighs through the grove and murmurs in the stream ;

For when the soul is labouring in despair,  
In vain the body breathes a purer air :  
No storm-toss'd sailor sighs for slumbering seas,—  
He dreads the tempest, but invokes the breeze ;  
On the smooth mirror of the deep resides  
Reflected wo, and o'er unruffled tides  
The ghost of every former danger glides.  
Thus, in the calms of life, we only see  
A steadier image of our misery ;  
But lively gales and gently-clouded skies  
Disperse the sad reflections as they rise ;  
And busy thoughts and little cares avail  
To ease the mind, when rest and reason fail.  
When the dull thought, by no designs employ'd,  
Dwells on the past, or suffer'd or enjoy'd,  
We bleed anew in every former grief,  
And joys departed furnish no relief.  
Not Hope herself, with all her flattering art,  
Can cure this stubborn sickness of the heart :  
The soul disdains each comfort she prepares,  
And anxious searches for congenial cares ;  
Those lenient cares, which, with our own combined,  
By mix'd sensations ease th' afflicted mind,  
And steal our grief away and leave their own behind ;  
A lighter grief ! which feeling hearts endure  
Without regret, nor e'en demand a cure.  
But what strange art, what magic can dispose  
The troubled mind to change its native woes ?  
Or lead us willing from ourselves, to see  
Others more wretched, more undone than we ?  
This, books can do ;—nor this alone ; they give  
New views to life, and teach us how to live ;  
They soothe the grieved, the stubborn they chastise,  
Fools they admonish, and confirm the wise :

Their aid they yield to all : they never shun  
The man of sorrow, nor the wretch undone :  
Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,  
They fly not sullen from the suppliant crowd ;  
Nor tell to various people various things,  
But show to subjects, what they show to  
kings.

Come, Child of Care ! to make thy soul  
serene,

Approach the treasures of this tranquil scene ;  
Survey the dome, and, as the doors unfold,  
The soul's best cure, in all her cares, behold !  
Where mental wealth the poor in thought may  
find,

And mental physic the diseased in mine ;  
See here the balms that passion's wounds as-  
surge ;

See coolers here, that damp the fire of rage ;  
Here alt'ratives, by slow degrees control  
The chronic habits of the sickly soul ;  
And round the heart and o'er the aching head,  
Mild opiates here their sober influence shed.  
Now bid thy soul man's busy scenes exclude,  
And view composed this silent multitude :—  
Silent they are, but, though deprived of sound,  
Here all the living languages abound ;  
Here all that live no more ; preserved they lie,  
In tombs that open to the curious eye.

Bless'd be the gracious Power, who taught  
mankind

To stamp a lasting image of the mind !—  
Beasts may convey, and tuneful birds may sing,  
Their mutual feelings, in the opening spring ;  
But man alone has skill and power to send  
The heart's warm dictates to the distant  
friend :

'Tis his alone to please, instruct, advise  
Ages remote, and nations yet to rise.

In sweet repose, when labour's children  
sleep,

When joy forgets to smile and care to weep,  
When passion slumbers in the lover's breast,  
And fear and guilt partake the balm of rest,  
Why then denies the studious man to share  
Man's common good, who feels his common  
care ?

Because the hope is his, that bids him fly  
Night's soft repose, and sleep's mild power  
deny ;

That after-ages may repeat his praise,  
And fame's fair weed be his, for length of days.  
Delightful prospect ! when we leave behind  
A worthy offspring of the fruitful mind !

Which, born and nursed through many an  
anxious day,  
Shall all our labour, all our care repay.

Yet all are not these births of noble kind,  
Not all the children of a vigorous mind ;  
But where the wisest should alone preside,  
The weak would rule us, and the blind would  
guide ;

Nay, man's best efforts taste of man, and show  
The poor and troubled source from which they  
flow :

Where most he triumphs, we his wants per-  
ceive,

And for his weakness in his wisdom grieve.  
But though imperfect all ; yet wisdom loves  
This seat serene, and virtue's self approves :—  
Here come the grieved, a change of thought to  
find ;

The curious here, to feed a craving mind ;  
Here the devout their peaceful temple choose ;  
And here the poet meets his favouring muse.

With awe, around these silent walks I tread ;  
These are the lasting mansions of the dead :—  
'The dead,' methinks a thousand tongues  
reply ;

'These are the tombs of such as cannot die !  
Crown'd with eternal fame, they sit sublime,  
And laugh at all the little strife of time.'

Hail, then, immortals ! ye who shine above,  
Each, in his sphere, the literary Jove ;  
And ye the common people of these skies,  
A humbler crowd of nameless deities ;  
Whether 'tis yours to lead the willing mind  
Through history's mazes, and the turnings  
find ;

Or whether, led by science, ye retire,  
Lost and bewilder'd in the vast desire ;  
Whether the Muse invites you to her bowers,  
And crowns your placid brows with living  
flowers ;

Or godlike wisdom teaches you to show  
The noblest road to happiness below ;  
Or men and manners prompt the easy page  
To mark the flying follies of the age :  
Whatever good ye boast, that good impart ;  
Inform the head and rectify the heart.

Lo ! all in silence, all in order stand  
And mighty folios first, a lordly band ;  
Then quartos their well-order'd ranks main-  
tain,

And light octavos fill a spacious plain :  
See yonder, ranged in more frequented rows,  
A humbler band of duodecimos ;



While undistinguish'd trifles swell the scene,  
The last new play and fritter'd magazine.

Thus 'tis in life, where first the proud, the great,

In leagu'd assembly keep their cumbrous state;

Heavy and huge, they fill the world with dread,

Are much admired, and are but little read :  
The commons next, a middle rank, are found ;

Professions fruitful pour their offspring round :  
Reasoners and wits are next their place allow'd,

And last, of vulgar tribes a countless crowd.

First, let us view the form, the size, the dress ;

For these the manners, nay the mind express ;  
That weight of wood, with leathern coat o'er-laid ;

Those ample clasps, of solid metal made ;  
The close-press'd leaves, unclosed for many an age ;

The dull red edging of the well-fill'd page :  
On the broad back the stubborn ridges roll'd,

Where yet the title stands in tarnish'd gold ;  
These all a sage and labour'd work proclaim,

A painful candidate for lasting fame :  
No idle wit, no trifling verse can lurk

In the deep bosom of that weighty work ;  
No playful thoughts degrade the solemn style,

Nor one light sentence claims a transient smile.

Hence, in these times, untouch'd the pages lie,

And slumber out their immortality :  
They had their day, when, after all his toil,

His morning study, and his midnight oil,  
At length an author's ONE great work appear'd,

By patient hope, and length of days, en-dear'd :

Expecting nations hail'd it from the press ;  
Poetic friends prefix'd each kind address ;

Princes and kings received the pond'rous gift,

And ladies read the work they could not lift.  
Fashion, though Folly's child, and guide of fools,

Rules e'en the wisest, and in learning rules ;  
From crowds and courts to Wisdom's seat she goes,

And reigns triumphant o'er her mother's foes.

For lo ! these far-rites of the ancient mode  
Lie all neglected like the Birth-day Ode ;

Ah ! needless now this weight of massy chain<sup>1</sup> ;

Safe in themselves, the once-loved works remain ;

No readers now invade their still retreat,  
None try to steal them from their parent-seat ;

Like ancient beauties, they may now discard  
Chains, bolts, and locks, and lie without a guard.

Our patient fathers trifling themes laid by,  
And roll'd o'er labour'd works th' attentive eye ;

Page after page, the much-enduring men  
Explored, the deeps and shallows of the pen ;

Till, every former note and comment known,  
They mark'd the spacious margin with their own :

Minute corrections proved their studious care,  
The little index, pointing, told us where ;

And many an emendation show'd the age  
Look'd far beyond the rubric title-page.

Our nicer palates lighter labours seek,  
Cloy'd with a folio-*Number* once a week ;

Bibles, with cuts and comments, thus go down :  
E'en light Voltaire is *number'd* through the town :

Thus physic flies abroad, and thus the law,  
From men of study, and from men of straw ;

Abstracts, abridgments, please the sickle times,

Panphlets and plays, and politics and rhymes :

But though to write be now a task of ease,  
The task is hard by manly arts to please,

When all our weakness is exposed to view,  
And half our judges are our rivals too.

Amid these works, on which the eager eye  
Delights to fix, or glides reluctant by,

When all combined, their decent pomp display,  
Where shall we first our early offering pay ?—

To thee, DIVINITY ! to thee, the light  
And guide of mortals, through their mental night ;

By whom we learn our hopes and fears to guide ;

To bear with pain, and to contend with pride ;

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By whom we learn our hopes and fears to guide ;

To bear with pain, and to contend with pride ;

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When grieved, to pray ; when injured, to forgive ;  
And with the world in charity\* to live.

Not truths like these inspired that numerous race,

Whose pious labours fill this ample space ;  
But questions nice, where doubt on doubt arose,

Awaked to war the long-contending foes.  
For dubious meanings, learn'd polemics strove,

And wars on faith prevented works of love ;  
The brands of discord far around were hurl'd,

And holy wrath inflamed a sinful world\*—  
Dull though impatient, peevish though devout,

With wit disgusting and despised without ;  
Saints in design, in execution men,  
Peace in their looks, and vengeance in their pen.

Methinks I see, and sicken at the sight,  
Spirits of spleen from yonder pile alight ;  
Spirits who prompted every damning page,  
With pontiff pride and still-increasing rage :  
Lo ! how they stretch their gloomy wings around,

And lash with furious strokes the trembling ground !

They pray, they fight, they murder, and they weep,—

Wolves in their vengeance, in their manners sheep ;

Too well they act the prophet's fatal part,  
Denouncing evil with a zealous heart ;  
And each, like Jonas, is displeased if God Repent his anger, or withhold his rod.

But here the dormant fury rests unsought,  
And Zeal sleeps soundly by the foes she fought ;

Here all the rage of controversy ends,  
And rival zealots rest like bosom-friends :

An Athanasian here, in deep repose,  
Sleeps with the fiercest of his Arian foes ;  
Socinians here with Calvinists abide,  
And thin partitions angry chiefs divide ;  
Here wily Jesuits simple Quakers meet,  
And Bellarmine has rest at Luther's feet.  
Great authors, for the church's glory fired,  
Are, for the church's peace, to rest retired ;  
And close beside, a mystic, maudlin race,  
Lie, 'Crums of Comfort for the Babes of Grace.'

Against her foes Religion well defends  
Her sacred truths, but often fears her friends ;  
If learn'd, their pride, if weak, their zeal she dreads,

And their hearts' weakness, who have soundest heads :

But most she fears the controversial pen,  
The holy strife of disputatious men ;  
Who the bless'd Gospel's peaceful page explore,  
Only to fight against its precepts more.

Near to these seats, behold yon slender frames,  
All closely fill'd and mark'd with modern names ;

Where no fair science ever shows her face,  
Few sparks of genius, and no spark of grace ;  
There sceptics rest, a still-increasing throng,  
And stretch their widening wings ten thousand strong :

Some in close fight their dubious claims maintain ;

Some skirmish lightly, fly and fight again ;  
Coldly profane, and impiously gay,  
Their end the same, though various in their way.

When first Religion came to bless the land,  
Her friends were then a firm believing band ;  
To doubt was, then, to plunge in guilt extreme,

And all was gospel that a monk could dream ;  
Insulted Reason fled the grov'ling soul,  
For Fear to guide, and visions to control :  
But now, when Reason has assumed her throne,

She, in her turn, demands to reign alone ;  
Rejecting all that lies beyond her view,  
And, being judge, will be a witness too :  
Insulted Faith then leaves the doubtful mind,  
To seek for truth, without a power to find :  
Ah ! when will both in friendly beams unite,  
And pour on erring man resistless light ?

Next to the seats, well stored with works divine,

An ample space, PHILOSOPHY ! is thine ;  
Our reason's guide, by whose assisting light  
We trace the moral bounds of wrong and right ;

Our guide through nature, from the sterile clay,  
To the bright orbs of yon celestial way !  
'Tis thine, the great, the golden chain to trace,  
Which runs through all, connecting race with race ;

Save where those puzzling, stubborn links remain,

Which thy inferior light pursues in vain :—

How vice and virtue in the soul contend ;  
How widely differ, yet how nearly blend !

What various passions war on either part,  
And now confirm, now melt the yielding heart :

How Fancy loves around the world to stray,  
While Judgment slowly picks his sober way ;

The stores of memory, and the flights sublime

Of genius, bound by neither space nor time ;—

All these divine Philosophy explores,  
Till, lost in awe, she wonders and adores.

From these, descending to the earth, she turns,  
And matter, in its various form, discerns ;  
She parts the beamy light with skill profound,  
Metes the thin air, and weighs the flying sound ;

'Tis hers, the lightning from the clouds to call,  
And teach the fiery mischief where to fall.

Yet more her volumes teach,—on these we look

As abstracts drawn from Nature's larger book :  
Here, first described, the torpid earth appears,  
And next, the vegetable robe it wears ;  
Where flow'ry tribes, in valleys, fields and groves,

Nurse the still flame, and feed the silent loves ;  
Loves, where no grief, nor joy, nor bliss, nor pain,

Warm the glad heart or vex the labouring brain ;

But as the green blood moves along the blade,  
The bed of Flora on the branch is made ;  
Where, without passion, love instinctive lives,  
And gives new life, unconscious that it gives.  
Advancing still in Nature's maze, we trace,  
In dens and burning plains, her savage race ;  
With those tame tribes who on their lord attend,

And find, in man, a master and a friend :  
Man crowns the scene, a world of wonders new,  
A moral world, that well demands our view.  
This world is here ; for, of more lofty kind,  
These neighbouring volumes reason on the mind ;

They paint the state of man ere yet endued  
With knowledge ;—man, poor, ignorant, and rude ;

Then, as his state improves, their pages swell,  
And all its cares, and all its comforts, tell :  
Here we behold how inexperience buys,  
At little price, the wisdom of the wise ;  
Without the troubles of an active state,  
Without the cares and dangers of the great,  
Without the miseries of the poor, we know  
What wisdom, wealth, and poverty bestow ;  
We see how reason calms the raging mind,  
And how contending passions urge mankind :  
Some, won by virtue, glow with sacred fire ;  
Some, lured by vice, indulge the low desire ;  
Whilst others, won by either, now pursue  
The guilty chase, now keep the good in view ;  
For ~~over~~ wretched, with themselves at strife,  
They lead a puzzled, vex'd, uncertain life ;  
For transient vice bequeaths a lingering pain  
Which transient virtue seeks to cure in vain.

Whilst thus engaged, high views enlarge the soul,

New interests draw, new principles control :  
Nor thus the soul alone resigns her grief,  
But here the tortured body finds relief ;  
For see where yonder sage Arachné shapes  
Her subtle gin, that not a fly escapes !

Her P~~h~~ysic fills the space, and far around,  
Pile above pile, her learned works abound :  
Glorious their aim—to ease the labouring heart ;

To war with death, and stop his flying dart ;

To trace the source whence the fierce contest grew,

And life's short lease on easier terms renew ;  
To calm the frenzy of the burning brain ;

To heal the tortures of imploring pain ;  
Or, when more powerful ills all efforts brave,

To ease the victim no device can save,  
And smooth the stormy passage to the grave.

But man, who knows no good unmix'd and pure,

Oft finds a poison where he sought a cure ;  
For grave deceivers lodge their labours here,

And cloud the science they pretend to clear :  
Scourges for sin, the solemn tribe are sent ;

Like fire and storms, they call us to repent ;  
But storms subside, and fires forget to rage,

These are eternal scourges of the age :  
'Tis not enough that each terrific hand

Spreads desolation round a guilty land ;  
But, train'd to ill, and harden'd by its crimes,

Their pen relentless kills through future times.

Say ye, who search these records of the dead,  
 Who read huge works, to boast what ye have read ;  
 Can all the real knowledge ye possess,  
 Or those (if such there are) who more than guess,  
 Atone for each impostor's wild mistakes,  
 And mend the blunders pride or folly makes ?  
 What thought so wild, what airy dream so light,

That will not prompt a theorist to write ?  
 What art so prevalent, what proof so strong,  
 That will convince him his attempt is wrong ?  
 One in the solids finds each lurking ill, •  
 Nor grants the passive fluids power to kill ;  
 A learned friend some subtler reason brings,  
 Absolves the channels, but condemns their springs ;

The subtle nerves, that shun the doctor's eye,  
 Escape no more his subtler theory ;  
 The vital heat, that warms the labouring heart,

Lends a fair system to these sons of art ;  
 The vital air, a pure and subtle stream,  
 Serves a foundation for an airy scheme,  
 Assists the doctor, and supports his dream.  
 Some have their favourite ills, and each disease

Is but a younger branch that kills from these :  
 One to the gout contracts all human pain.  
 He views it raging in the frantic brain ;  
 Finds it in fevers all his efforts mar,  
 And sees it lurking in the cold catarrh :  
 Bilious by some, by others nervous seen,  
 Rage the fantastic demons of the spleen ;  
 And every symptom of the strange disease  
 With every system of the sage agrees.

Ye frigid tribe, on whom I wasted long  
 The tedious hours, and ne'er indulged in song ;  
 Ye first seducers of my easy heart,  
 Who promised knowledge ye could not impart ;

Ye dull deluders, truth's destructive foes ;  
 Ye sons of fiction, clad in stupid prose ;  
 Ye treacherous leaders, who, yourselves in doubt,

Light up false fires, and send us far about ;—  
 Still may yon spider round your pages spin,  
 Subtle and slow, her emblematic gin !  
 Buried in dust and lost in silence, dwell,  
 Most potent, grave, and reverend friends—  
 farewell !

Near these, and where the setting sun displays,

Through the dim window, his departing rays,  
 And gilds yon columns, there, on either side,  
 The huge abridgments of the LAW abide ;  
 Fruitful as vice the dread correctors stand,  
 And spread their guardian terrors round the land ;

Yet, as the best that human care can do,  
 Is mix'd with error, oft with evil too,  
 Skill'd in deceit, and practised to evade,  
 Knaves stand secure, for whom these laws were made ;

And justice vainly each expedient tries,  
 While art eludes it, or while power defies.  
 ' Ah ! happy age,' the youthful poet sings,  
 When the free nations knew not laws nor kings ;

When all were bless'd to share a common store,  
 And none were proud of wealth, for none were poor ;

No wars nor tumults vex'd each still domain,  
 No thirst for empire, no desire of gain ;  
 No proud great man, nor one who would be great,

Drove modest merit from its proper state ;  
 Nor into distant climes would avarice roam,  
 To fetch delights for luxury at home :  
 Bound by no ties which kept the soul in awe,

They dwelt at liberty, and love was law !'  
 ' Mistaken youth ! each nation first was rude,

Each man a cheerless son of solitude,  
 To whom no joys of social life were known,  
 None felt a care that was not all his own ;  
 Or in some languid clime his abject soul  
 Bow'd to a little tyrant's stern control ;  
 A slave, with slaves his monarch's throne he raised,

And in rude song his ruder idol praised ;  
 The meaner cares of life were all he knew ;  
 Bounded his pleasures, and his wishes few :  
 But when by slow degrees the Arts arose,  
 And Science waken'd from her long repose ;  
 When Commerce, rising from the bed of ease,  
 Ran round the land, and pointed to the seas ;  
 When Emulation, born with jealous eye,  
 And Avarice, lent their spurs to industry ;  
 Then one by one the numerous laws were made,

Those to control, and these to succour trade ;

To curb the insolence of rude command,  
To snatch the victim from the usurer's hand ;  
To awe the bold, to yield the wrong'd redress,  
And feed the poor with Luxury's excess.'

Like some vast flood, unbounded, fierce,  
and strong,  
His nature leads ungovern'd man along ; •  
Like mighty bulwarks made to stem that tide,  
The laws are form'd and placed on ev'ry side :  
Whene'er it breaks the bounds by these de-  
creed,

New statutes rise, and stronger laws succeed ;  
More and more gentle grows the dying stream,  
More and more strong the rising bulwarks  
seem ;

Till, like a miner working sure and slow,  
Luxury creeps on, and ruins all below ;  
The basis sinks, the ample piles decay ;  
The stately fabric shakes and falls away ;  
Primeval want and ignorance come on,  
But freedom, that exalts the savage state, is  
gone.

Next, HISTORY ranks ;—there full in front  
she lies,

And every nation her dread tale supplies ;  
Yet History has her doubts, and every age  
With sceptic queries marks the passing page ;  
Records of old nor later date are clear,  
Too distant those, and these are placed too  
near ;

There time conceals the objects from our view,  
Here our own passions and a writer's too :  
Yet, in these volumes, see how states arose !  
Guarded by virtue from surrounding foes ;  
Their virtue lost, and of their triumphs vain,  
Lo ! how they sunk to slavery again !  
Sate with power, of fame and wealth  
possess'd,

A nation grows too glorious to be bless'd ;  
Conspicuous made, she stands the mark of all,  
And foes join foes to triumph in her fall.

Thus speaks the page that paints ambition's  
race,

The monarch's pride, his glory, his disgrace ;  
The headlong course, that madd'ning heroes  
run,

How soon triumphant, and how soon undone ;  
How slaves, turn'd tyrants, offer crowns to sale,  
And each fall'n nation's melancholy tale.

Lo ! where of late the Book of Martyrs  
stood,  
Old pious tracts, and Bibles bound in wood ;

There, such the taste of our degenerate age,  
Stand the profane delusions of the STAGE :  
Yet virtue owns the TRAGIC MUSE a friend,  
Fable her means, morality her end ;  
For this she rules all passions in their turns ;  
And now the bosom bleeds, and now it burns,  
Pity with weeping eye surveys her bowl,  
Her anger swells, her terror chills the soul ;  
She makes the vile to virtue yield applause,  
And own her sceptre while they break her laws ;  
For vice in others is abhorrd of all,  
And villains triumph when the worthless fall.

Not thus her sister COMEDY prevails,  
Who shoots at folly, for her arrow fails ;  
Folly, by dulness arm'd, eludes the wound,  
And harmless sees the feather'd shafts re-  
bound ;

Unhurt she stands, applauds the archer's skill,  
Laughs at her mahoe, and is folly still.

Yet well the Muse portrays in fancied scenes,  
What pride will stoop to, what profession  
means ;

How formal fools the farce of state applaud,  
How caution watches at the lips of fraud ;  
The wordy variance of domestic life ;  
The tyrant husband, the retorting wife ;  
The snares for innocence, the lie of trade,  
And the smooth tongue's habitual masquerade.

With her the virtues too obtain a place,  
Each gentle passion, each becoming grace ;  
The social joy in life's securer road,  
Its easy pleasure, its substantial good ;  
The happy thought that conscious virtue  
gives,

And all that ought to live, and all that lives.

But who are these ? Methinks a noble  
mien

And awful grandeur in their form are seen,  
Now in disgrace : what though by time is  
spread

Polluting dust o'er every reverend head ;  
What though beneath yon gilded tribe they  
lie,

And dull observers pass insulting by :  
Forbid it shame, forbid it decent awe,  
What seems so grave, should no attention  
draw !

Come, let us then with reverend step advance,  
And greet—the ancient worthies of ROMANCE.

Hence, ye profane ! I feel a former dread,  
A thousand visions float around my head :

Hark ! hollow blasts through empty courts  
resound,

And shadowy forms with staring eyes stalk  
round ;

See ! moats and bridges, walls and castles rise,  
Ghosts, fairies, demons, dance before our eyes ;  
Lo ! magic verse inscribed on golden gate,  
And bloody hand that beckons on to fate :—  
' And who art thou, thou little page, unfold ?  
Say, doth thy lord my Claribel withhold ?  
Go tell him straight, Sir Knight, thou must  
resign

The captive queen ;—for Claribel is mine.  
Away he flies ; and now for bloody deeds,  
Black suits of armour, masks, and foaming  
steeds ;

The giant falls ; his recreant throat I seize,  
And from his corslet take the massy keys :—  
Dukes, lords, and knights in long procession  
move,

Released from bondage with my virgin love :—  
She comes ! she comes ! in all the charms of  
youth,

Unequall'd love and unsuspected truth !

Ah ! happy he who thus, in magic themes,  
O'er worlds bewitch'd, in early raptured dreams,  
Where wild Enchantment waves her potent  
wand,

And Fancy's beauties fill her fairy land ;  
Where doubtful objects strange desires excite,  
And Fear and Ignorance afford delight.

But lost, for ever lost, to me these joys,  
Which Reason scatters, and which Time de-  
stroys ;

Too dearly bought : maturer judgment calls  
My busied mind from tales and madrigals ;  
My doughty giants all are slain or fled,  
And all my knights, blue, green, and yellow,  
dead !

No more the midnight fairy tribe I view,  
All in the merry moonshine tippling dew ;  
E'en the last lingering fiction of the brain,  
The church-yard ghost, is now at rest again ;  
And all these wayward wanderings of my  
youth

Fly Reason's power and shun the light of  
truth.

With fiction then does real joy reside,  
And is our reason the delusive guide ?  
Is it then right to dream the syrens sing ?  
Or mount enraptured on the dragon's wing ?  
No, 'tis the infant mind, to care unknown,  
That makes th' imagined paradise its own ;

Soon as reflections in the bosom rise,  
Light slumbers vanish from the clouded eyes :  
The tear and smile, that once together rose,  
Are then divorced ; the head and heart are foes :  
Enchantment bows to Wisdom's serious plan,  
And Pain and Prudence make and mar the  
man.

While thus, of power and fancied empire vain,  
With various thoughts my mind I entertain ;  
While books my slaves, with tyrant hand I  
seize,  
Pleased with the pride that will not let them  
please ;

Sudden I find terrific thoughts arise,  
And sympathetic sorrow fills my eyes ;  
For, lo ! while yet my heart admits the wound,  
I see the CRITIC army ranged around.

Foes to our race ! if ever ye have known  
A father's fears for offspring of your own ;—  
If ever, smiling o'er a lucky line,  
Ye thought the sudden sentiment divine,  
Then paused and doubted, and then, tired of  
doubt,

With rage as sudden dash'd the stanza out ;—  
If, after fearing much and pausing long,  
Ye ventured on the world your labour'd song,  
And from the crusty critics of those days  
Implored the feeble tribute of their praise ;  
Remember now the fears that moved you then,  
And, spite of truth, let mercy guide your pen.

What vent'rous race are ours ! what mighty  
foes

Lie waiting all around them to oppose  
What treacherous friends betray them to the  
fight !

What dangers threaten them !—yet still they  
write :

A hapless tribe ! to every evil born,  
Whom villains hate, and fools affect to scorn :  
Strangers they come, amid a world of wo,  
And taste the largest portion ere they go.

Pensive I spoke, and cast mine eyes around ;  
The roof, methought, return'd a solemn  
sound ;

Each column seem'd to shake, and clouds,  
like smoke,  
From dusty piles and ancient volumes broke ;  
Gathering above, like mists condensed they  
seem,

Exhaled in summer from the rushy stream ;  
Like flowing robes they now appear, and twine  
Round the large members of a form divine

His silver beard, that swept his aged breast,  
His piercing eye, that inward light express'd,  
Were seen,—but clouds and darkness veil'd  
the rest.

Fear chill'd my heart: to one of mortal race,  
How awful seem'd the Genius of the place!  
So in Cimmerian shores, Ulysses saw  
His parent-shade, and shrunk in pious awe;  
Like him I stood, and wrapt in thought profound,

When from the pitying power broke forth a  
solemn sound:—

‘Care lives with all; no rules, no precepts  
save

The wise from wo, no fortitude the brave;  
Grief is to man as certain as the grave:

Tempests and storms in life's whole progress  
rise,

And hope shines dimly through o'erclouded  
skies;

Some drops of comfort on the favour'd fall,  
But showers of sorrow are the lot of all:  
Partial to talents, then, shall Heav'n with-  
draw

Th' afflicting rod, or break the general law?  
Shall he who soars, inspired by loftier views,

Life's little cares and little pains refuse?  
Shall he not rather feel a double share

Of mortal wo, when doubly arm'd to bear?

‘Hard is his fate who builds his peace of  
mind

On the precarious mercy of mankind;  
Who hopes for wild and visionary things,  
And mounts o'er unknown seas with vent'rous  
wings:

But as, of various evils that befall  
The human race, some portion goes to all;  
To him perhaps the milder lot's assign'd,  
Who feels his consolation in his mind; •

And, lock'd within his bosom, bears about  
A mental charm for every care without.

E'en in the pangs of each domestic grief,  
Or health or vigorous hope affords relief;

And every wound the tortured bosom feels,  
Or virtue bears, or some preserver heals;

Some generous friend, of ample power  
possess'd;

Some feeling heart, that bleeds for the dis-  
tress'd;

Some breast that glows with virtues all divine;  
Some noble RUTLAND, Misery's friend and  
thine.

‘Nor say, the Muse's song, the Poet's pen,  
Merit the scorn they meet from little men.

With cautious freedom if the numbers flow,  
Not wildly high, nor pitifully low;

If vice alone their honest aims oppose,  
Why so ashamed their friends, so loud their  
foes?

Happy for men in every age and clime,  
If all the sons of vision dealt in rhyme.

Go on then, Son of Vision! still pursue  
Thy airy dreams; the world is dreaming too.

Ambition's lofty views, the pomp of state,  
The pride of wealth, the splendour of the  
great,

Stripp'd of their mask, their cares and troubles  
known,

Are visions far less happy than thy own:  
Go on! and, while the sons of care complain,

Be wisely gay and innocently vain;  
While serious souls are by their fears undone,

Blow sportive bladders in the beamy sun,  
And call them worlds! and bid the greatest  
show

More radiant colours in their worlds below:  
Then, as they break, the slaves of care reprove,

And tell them, Such are all the toys they love.’

# THE VILLAGE

[1783]

## IN TWO BOOKS

### BOOK I

The Subject proposed—Remarks upon Pastoral Poetry—A Tract of Country near the Coast described—An impoverished Borough—Smugglers and their Assistants—Rude Manners of the Inhabitants—Ruinous Effects of a high Tide—The Village Life more generally considered: Evils of it—The youthful Labourer—The old Man: his Soliloquy—The Parish Workhouse: its Inhabitants—The sick Poor: their Apothecary—The dying Pauper—The Village Priest.

THE Village Life, and every care that reigns  
O'er youthful peasants and declining swains;  
What labour yields, and what, that labour  
past,

Age, in its hour of languor, finds at last;  
What form the real picture of the poor,  
Demand a song—the Muse can give no more.

Fled are those times, when, in harmonious  
strains,

The rustic poet praised his native plains:  
No shepherds now, in smooth alternate verse,  
Their country's beauty or their nymphs'  
rehearse;

Yet still for these we frame the tender strain,  
Still in our lays fond Corydons complain,  
And shepherds' boys their amorous pains  
reveal,

The only pains, alas! they never feel.

On Mincio's banks, in Caesar's bounteous  
reign,

If Tityrus found the Golden Age again,  
Must sleepy bards the flattering dream pro-  
long,

Mechanic echoes of the Mantuan song?  
From Truth and Nature shall we widely stray,  
Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads the  
way?

Yes, thus the Muses sing of happy swains.  
Because the Muses never knew their pains:  
They boast their peasants' pipes; but pea-  
sants now

Resign their pipes and plod behind the plough;  
And few, amid the rural-tribe, have time  
To number syllables, and play with rhyme;  
Save honest Duck, what son of verse could  
share

The poet's rapture, and the peasant's care?  
Or the great labours of the field degrade,  
With the new peril of a poorer trade?

From this chief cause these idle praises  
spring,

That themes so easy few forbear to sing;  
For no deep thought the trifling subjects ask;  
To sing of shepherds is an easy task:  
The happy youth assumes the common strain,  
A nymph his mistress, and himself a swain;  
With no sad scenes he clouds his tuneful  
prayer,

But all, to look like her, is painted fair.

I grant indeed that fields and flocks have  
charms

For him that grazes or for him that farms;  
But when amid such pleasing scenes I trace  
The poor laborious natives of the place,  
And see the mid-day sun, with fervid ray,  
On their bare heads and dewy temples play;  
While some, with feeble heads and fainter  
hearts,

Deplore their fortune, yet sustain their parts:  
Then shall I dare these real ills to hide  
In tinsel trappings of poetic pride?

No; cast by Fortune on a frowning coast,  
Which neither groves nor happy valleys boast;  
Where other cares than those the Muse relates,  
And other shepherds dwell with other  
mates;



By such examples taught, I paint the Cot,  
As Truth will paint it, and as Bards will not:  
Nor you, ye poor, of letter'd scorn complain,  
To you the smoothest song is smooth in vain;  
O'ercome by labour, and bow'd down by time,  
Feel you the barren flattery of a rhyme?  
Can poets soothe you, when you pine for  
bread,

By winding myrtles round your ruin'd shed?  
Can their light tales your weighty griefs o'er-  
power,

Or glad with airy mirth the toilsome hour?  
Lo! where the heath, with withering brake  
grown o'er,

Lends the light turf that warms the neigh-  
bouring poor;

From thence a length of burningsand appears,  
Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears;  
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,  
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye:  
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,  
And to the ragged infant threaten war;  
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;  
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;  
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,  
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;  
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a  
shade,

And clasping tares cling round the sickly  
blade;

With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,  
And a sad splendour vainly shines around.  
So looks the nymph whom wretched arts adorn,  
Betray'd by man, then left for man to scorn;  
Whose cheek in vain assumes the mimic rose,  
While her sad eyes the troubled breast dis-  
close;

Whose outward splendour is but folly's dress,  
Exposing most, when most it gilds distress.

Here joyless roam a wild amphibious race,  
With sullen wo display'd in every face;  
Who, far from civil arts and social fly,  
And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye.

Here too the lawless merchant of the main  
Draws from his plough th' intoxicated swain;  
Want only claim'd the labour of the day,  
But vice now steals his nightly rest away.

Where are the swains, who, daily labour  
done,

With rural games play'd down the setting sun;  
Who struck with matchless force the bounding  
ball,

Or made the pond'rous quoit obliquely fall;

While some huge Ajax, terrible and strong,  
Engaged some artful stripling of the throng,  
And fell beneath him, foil'd, while far around  
Hoarse triumph rose, and rocks return'd the  
sound?

Where now are these?—Beneath yon cliff  
they stand,

To show the freighted pinnace where to land;  
To load the ready steed with guilty haste,  
To fly in terror o'er the pathless waste,  
Or, when detected, in their straggling course,  
To foil their foes by cunning or by force;  
Or, yielding part (which equal knaves de-  
mand),

To gain a lawless passport through the land.  
Here, wand'ring long, amid these frowning  
fields,

I sought the simple life that Nature yields;  
Rapine and Wrong and Fear usurp'd her place,  
And a bold, artful, surly, savage race;  
Who, only skill'd to take the finny tribe,  
The yearly dinner, or septennial bribe,  
Wait on the shore, and, as the waves run high,  
On the tost vessel bend their eager eye,  
Which to their coast directs its vent'rous way;  
Theirs, or the ocean's, miserable prey.

As on their neighbouring beach yon swallows  
stand,

And wait for favouring winds to leave the  
land;

While still for flight the ready wing is spread:  
So waited I the favouring hour, and fled;  
Fled from these shores where guilt and famine  
reign,

And cried, Ah! hapless they who still remain;  
Who still remain to hear the ocean roar,  
Whose greedy waves devour the lessening  
shore;

Till some fierce tide, with more imperious  
sway,

Sweeps the low hut and all it holds away;  
When the sad tenant weeps from door to door,  
And begs a poor protection from the poor!

But these are scenes where Nature's sniggard  
hand

Gave a spare portion to the famish'd land;  
Hers is the fault, if here mankind complain  
Of fruitless toil and labour spent in vain;  
But yet in other scenes more fair in view,  
Where Plenty smiles—alas! she smiles for  
few—

And those who taste not, yet behold her store,  
Are as the slaves that dig the golden ore,—

The wealth around them makes them doubly poor.

Or will you deem them amply paid in health,

Labour's fair child, that languishes with wealth?

Go then ! and see them rising with the sun,  
Through a long course of daily toil to run ;  
See them beneath the dog-star's raging heat,  
When the knees tremble and the temples beat ;  
Behold them, leaning on their scythes, look o'er  
The labour past, and toils to come explore ;  
See them alternate suns and showers engage,  
And hoard up aches and anguish for their age ;  
Through fens and marshy moors their steps pursue,

When their warm pores imbibe the evening dew ;

Then own that labour may as fatal be  
To these thy slaves, as thine excess to thee.

Amid this tribe too oft a manly pride  
Strives in strong toil the fainting heart to hide ;  
There may you see the youth of slender frame  
Contend with weakness, weariness, and shame ;  
Yet, urged along, and proudly loth to yield,  
He strives to join his fellows of the field.  
Till long-contending nature droops at last,  
Declining health rejects his poor repast,  
His cheerless spouse the coming danger sees,  
And mutual murmurs urge the slow disease.

Yet grant them health, 'tis not for us to tell,  
Though the head droops not, that the heart is well ;

Or will you praise that homely, healthy fare,  
Plenteous and plain, that happy peasants share !

Oh ! trifle not with wants you cannot feel,  
Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal ;  
Homely, not wholesome, plain, not plenteous, such

As you who praise would never deign to touch.

Ye gentle souls, who dream of rural ease,  
Whom the smooth stream and smother sonnet please ;

Go ! if the peaceful cot your praises share,  
Go look within, and ask if peace be there ;  
If peace be his—that drooping weedy sire,  
Or theirs, that offspring round their feeble fire ;  
Or hers, that matron pale, whose trembling hand

Turns on the wretched hearth th' expiring brand !

Nor yet can Time itself obtain for these  
Life's latest comforts, due respect and ease ;  
For yonder see that hoary swain, whose age  
Can with no cares except his own engage ;  
Who, propp'd on that rude staff, looks up to see

The bare arms broken from the withering tree,  
On which, a boy, he climb'd the loftiest bough,  
Then his first joy, but his sad emblem now.

He once was chief in all the rustic trade ;  
His steady hand the straightest furrow made ;  
Full many a prize he won, and still is proud  
To find the triumphs of his youth allow'd ;  
A transient pleasure sparkles in his eyes,  
He hears and smiles, then thinks again and sighs :

For now he journeys to his grave in pain ;  
The rich disdain him ; nay, the poor disdain :

Alternate masters now their slave command,  
Urge the weak efforts of his feeble hand,  
And, when his age attempts its task in vain,  
With ruthless taunts, of lazy poor complain.<sup>1</sup>

Oft may you see him, when he tends the sheep,

His winter-charge, beneath the hillock weep ;  
Oft hear him murmur to the winds that blow  
O'er his white locks and bury them in snow,  
When, roused by rage and muttering in the morn,

He mends the broken hedge with icy thorn :—  
' Why do I live, when I desire to be

At once from life and life's long labour free ?  
Like leaves in spring, the young are blown away,

Without the sorrows of a slow decay ;  
I, like yon wither'd leaf, remain behind,  
Nipp'd by the frost, and shivering in the wind ;

There it abides till younger buds come on,  
As I, now all my fellow-swains are gone ;  
Then, from the rising generation thrust,  
It falls, like me, unnoticed to the dust.

' These fruitful fields, these numerous flocks I see ;

Are others' gain, but killing cares to me ;  
To me the children of my youth are lords,  
Cool in their looks, but hasty in their words ;  
Wants of their own demand their care ; and who

Feels his own want and succours others too ?  
A lonely, wretched man, in pain I go,  
None need my help, and none relieve my woe ;

Then let my bones beneath the turf be laid,  
And men forget the wretch they would not aid.'

Thus groan the old, till, by disease oppress'd,  
They taste a final wo, and then they rest.

Theirs is yon house that holds the parish-poor,  
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door ;

There, where the putrid vapours, flagging,  
play,  
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day ;—

There children dwell who know no parents' care ;

Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there !

Heartbroken matrons on their joyless bed,  
Forsaken wives, and mothers never wed ;  
Dejected widows with unheeded tears,  
And crippled age with more than childhood fears ;

The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they !

The moping idiot and the madman gay.  
Here too the sick their final doom receive,  
Here brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve,

Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,

Mix'd with the clamours of the crowd below ;  
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,

And the cold charities of man to man :  
Whose laws indeed for ruin'd age provide,  
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride ;

But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,

And pride embitters what it can't deny.

Say ye, oppress'd by some fantastic woes,  
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose ;  
Who press the downy couch, while slaves advance

With timid eye, to read the distant glance ;  
Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease,  
To name the nameless ever-new disease ;  
Who with mock patience dire complaints endure,

Which real pain and that alone can cure ;  
How would ye bear in real pain to lie,  
Despised, neglected, left alone to die ?

How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,  
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death ?

Such is that room which one rude beam divides,

And naked rafters form the sloping sides ;  
Where the vile bands that bind the thatch are seen,

And lath and mud are all that lie between ;  
Save one dull pane, that, coarsely patch'd,  
gives way

To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day :  
Here, on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,  
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head ;

For him no hand the cordial cup applies,  
Or wipes the tear that stagnates in his eyes ;  
No friends with soft discourse his pain beguile,  
Or promise hope till sickness wears a smile.

But soon a loud and hasty summons calls,  
Shakes the thin roof, and echoes round the walls ;

Anon, a figure enters, quaintly neat,  
All pride and business, bustle and conceit ;  
With looks unalter'd by these scenes of wo,  
With speed that, entering, speaks his haste to go,

He bids the gazing throng around him fly,  
And carries fate and physic in his eye :

A potent quack, long versed in human ills,  
Who first insults the victim whom he kills ;  
Whose murderous hand a drowsy Bench protect,

And whose most tender mercy is neglect.

Paid by the parish for attendance here,  
He wears contempt upon his sapient sneer ;  
In haste he seeks the bed where Misery lies,  
Impatience mark'd in his averted eyes ;

And, some habitual queries hurried o'er,  
Without reply, he rushes on the door :  
His drooping patient, long inured to pain,  
And long unheeded, knows remonstrance vain ;

He ceases now the feeble help to crave  
Of man ; and silent sinks into the grave.

But ere his death some pious doubts arise,  
Some simple fears, which 'bold bad' men despise ;

Fain would he ask the parish-priest to prove  
His title certain to the joys above :  
For this he sends the murmuring nurse, who calls

The holy stranger to these dismal walls :

And doth not he, the pious man, appear,  
 He, 'passing rich with forty pounds a year?'  
 Ah! no; a shepherd of a different stock,  
 And far unlike him, feeds this little flock:  
 A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday's task  
 As much as God or man can fairly ask;  
 The rest he gives to loves and labours light,  
 To fields the morning, and to feasts the night;  
 None better skill'd the noisy pack to guide,  
 To urge their chase, to cheer them or to chide;  
 A sportsman keen, he shoots through half the  
 day,  
 And, skill'd at whist, devotes the night to  
 play:  
 Then, while such honours bloom around his  
 head,  
 Shall he sit sadly by the sick man's bed,  
 To raise the hope he feels not, or with zeal  
 To combat fears that e'en the pious feel?  
 Now once again the gloomy scene explore,  
 Less gloomy now; the bitter hour is o'er,  
 The man of many sorrows sighs no more.—  
 Up yonder hill, behold how sadly slow  
 The bier moves winding from the vale below;  
 There lie the happy dead, from trouble free,  
 And the glad parish pays the frugal fee:

No more, O Death! thy victim starts to hear  
 Churchwarden stern, or kingly overseer;  
 No more the farmer claims his humble bow,  
 Thou art his lord, the best of tyrants thou!  
 Now to the church behold the mourners  
 come,  
 Sedately torpid and devoutly dumb;  
 The village children now their games suspend,  
 To see the bier that bears their ancient  
 friend;  
 For he was one in all their idle sport,  
 And like a monarch ruled their little court  
 The pliant bow he form'd, the flying ball,  
 The bat, the wicket, were his labours all;  
 Him now they follow to his grave, and stand  
 Silent and sad, and gazing, hand in hand;  
 While bending low, their eager eyes explore  
 The mingled relics of the parish poor:  
 The bell tolls late, the moping owl flies round,  
 Fear marks the flight and magnifies the  
 sound;  
 The busy priest, detain'd by weightier care,  
 Defers his duty till the day of prayer;  
 And, waiting long, the crowd retire distress'd,  
 To think a poor man's bones should lie un-  
 bless'd.<sup>2</sup>

## BOOK II

There are found, amid the Evils of a laborious  
 Life, some Views of Tranquillity and Happi-  
 ness—The Repose and Pleasure of a Sum-  
 mer Sabbath: interrupted by Intoxication and  
 Dispute—Village Detraction—Com-  
 plaints of the 'Squire—The Evening Riots—  
 Justice—Reasons for this Unpleasant  
 View of Rustic Life: the Effect it should  
 have upon the Lower Classes; and the  
 Higher—These last have their peculiar  
 Distresses: Exemplified in the Life and  
 heroic Death of Lord Robert Manners—  
 Concluding Address to His Grace the Duke  
 of Rutland.

No longer truth, though shown in *verse*,  
 disdain,  
 But own the Village Life a life of pain:  
 I too must yield, that oft amid these woes  
 Are gleams of transient mirth and hours of  
 sweet repose,

Such as you find on yonder sportive Green,  
 The 'squire's tall gate and churchway-walk  
 between;  
 Where loitering stray a little tribe of friends,  
 On a fair Sunday when the sermon ends:  
 Then rural beaux their best attire put on,  
 To win their nymphs, as other nymphs are won;  
 While those long wed go plain, and by degrees,  
 Like other husbands, quit their care to please.  
 Some of the sermon talk, a sober crowd,  
 And loudly praise, if it were preach'd aloud;  
 Some on the labours of the week look round;  
 Feel their own worth, and think their toil  
 renown'd;  
 Whilesome, whose hopes to no renown extend,  
 Are only pleased to find their labours end.  
 Thus, as their hours glide on, with pleasure  
 fraught,  
 Their careful masters brood the painful  
 thought;

Much in their mind they murmur and lament,  
That one fair day should be so idly spent ;  
And think that Heaven deals hard, to tithe  
their store

And tax their time for preachers and the poor.

Yet still, ye humbler friends, enjoy your  
hour,

This is your portion, yet unclaim'd of power ;  
This is Heaven's gift to weary men oppress'd,  
And seems the type of their expected rest :  
But yours, alas ! are joys that soon decay ;  
Frail joys, begun and ended with the day ;  
Or yet, while day permits those joys to reign,  
The village vices drive them from the plain.

See the stout churl, in drunken fury great,  
Strike the bare bosom of his teeming mate !  
His naked vices, rude and unrefined,  
Exert their open empire o'er the mind ;  
But can we less the senseless rage despise,  
Because the savage acts without disguise ?

Yet here disguise, the city's vice, is seen,  
And Slander steals along and taints the Green :  
At her approach domestic peace is gone,  
Domestic broils at her approach come on ;  
She to the wife the husband's crime conveys,  
She tells the husband when his consort strays ;  
Her busy tongue, through all the little state,  
Diffuses doubt, suspicion, and debate ;  
Peace, tim'rous goddess ! quits her old  
domain,

In sentiment and song content to reign.

Nor are the nymphs that breathe the rural  
air

So fair as Cynthia's, nor so chaste as fair :  
These to the town afford each fresher face,  
And the clown's trull receives the peer's  
embrace ;

From whom, should chance again convey her  
down,

The peer's disease in turn attacks the clown.

Here too the 'squires, or 'squire-like farm-  
ers, talk,

How round their regions nightly pilferers  
walk ;

How from their ponds the fish are borne,  
and all

The rip'ning treasures from their lofty wall ;  
How meaner rivals in their sports delight,  
Just rich enough to claim a doubtful right ;  
Who take a licence round their fields to stray,  
A mongrel race ! the poachers of the day.

And hark ! the riots of the Green begin,  
That sprang at first from yonder noisy inn ;

What time the weekly pay was vanish'd all,  
And the slow hostess scored the threat'ning  
wall ;

What time they ask'd, their friendly feast to  
close,

A final cup, and that will make them foes ;  
When blows ensue that break the arm of toil,  
And rustic battle ends the boobies' broil.

Save when to yonder Hall they bend their  
way,

Where the grave justice ends the grievous  
fray ;

He who recites, to keep the poor in awe,  
The law's vast volume—for he knows the

• law :—

To him with anger or with shame repair  
The injured peasant and deluded fair.

Lo ! at his throne the silent nymph appears,  
Frail by her shape, but modest in her tears ;  
And while she stands abash'd, with conscious  
eye,

Some favourite female of her judge glides by,  
Who views with scornful glance the trump's  
fate,

And thanks the stars that made her keeper  
great ;

Near her the swain, about to bear for life  
One certain evil, doubts 'twixt war and wife ;  
But, while the falt'ring damsel takes her  
oath,

Consents to wed, and so secures them both.

Yet why, you ask, these humble crimes  
relate,

Why make the poor as guilty as the great ?  
To show the great, those mightier sons of  
pride,

How near in vice the lowest are allied ;  
Such are their natures and their passions  
such,

But these disguise too little, those too much :  
So shall the man of power and pleasure see

In his own slave as vile a wretch as he ;  
In his luxurious lord the servant find

His own low pleasures and degenerate mind ;  
And each in all the kindred vices trace,

Of a poor, blind, bewilder'd, erring race ;  
Who, a short time in varied fortune past,

Die, and are equal in the dust at last.  
And you, ye poor, who still lament your  
fate,

Forbear to envy those you call the great ;  
And know, amid those blessings they possess,  
They are, like you, the victims of distress ;

While sloth with many a pang torments her slave,

Fear waits on guilt, and danger shakes the brave.

Oh ! if in life one noble chief appears,  
Great in his name, while blooming in his years ;

Born to enjoy whate'er delights mankind,  
And yet to all you feel or fear resign'd ;  
Who gave up joys and hopes to you unknown,  
For pains and dangers greater than your own :  
If such there be, then let your murmurs cease,  
Think, think of him, and take your lot in peace.

And such there was :—Oh ! grief that  
checks our pride,  
Weeping we say there was,—for Manners  
died :

Beloved of Heaven, these humble lines forgive,  
That sing of Thee,<sup>3</sup> and thus aspire to live.

As the tall oak, whose vigorous branches  
form

An ample shade and brave the wildest storm,  
High o'er the subject wood is seen to grow,  
The guard and glory of the trees below ;  
Till on its head the fiery bolt descends,  
And o'er the plain the shatter'd trunk extends ;

Yet then it lies, all wond'rous as before,  
And still the glory, though the guard no more :  
So thou, when every virtue, every grace,  
Rose in thy soul, or shone within thy face ;  
When, though the son of Granby, thou were  
known

Less by thy father's glory than thy own ;  
When Honour loved and gave thee every  
charm,

Fire to thy eye and vigour to thy arm ;  
Then from our lofty hopes and longing eyes,  
Fate and thy virtues call'd thee to the skies ;  
Yet still we wonder at thy tow'ring fame,  
And losing thee, still dwell upon thy name.

Oh ! ever honour'd, ever valued ! say,  
What verse can praise thee, or what work  
repay ?

Yet verse (in all we can) thy worth repays,  
Nor trusts the tardy zeal of future days ;—  
Honours for thee thy country shall prepare,  
Thee in their hearts, the good, the brave shall  
bear ;

To deeds like thine shall noblest chiefs aspire,  
The Muse shall mourn thee, and the world  
admire.

In future times, when smit with Glory's  
charms,

The untried youth first quits a father's  
arms ;—

' Oh ! be like him,' the weeping sire shall  
say ;

' Like Manners walk, who walk'd in Honour's  
way ;

In danger foremost, yet in death sedate,  
Oh ! be like him in all things, but his fate !'

If for that fate such public tears be shed,  
That Victory seems to lie now thou art dead ;  
How shall a friend his nearer hope resign,  
That friend a brother, and whose soul was  
thine ?

By what bold lines shall we his grief express,  
Or by what soothing numbers make it less ?

'Tis not, I know the chiming of a song,  
Nor all the powers that to the Muse belong,  
Words aptly cull'd and meanings well ex-  
press'd,

Can calm the sorrows of a wounded breast ;  
But Virtue, soother of the fiercest pains,  
Shall heal that bosom, Rutland, where she  
reigns.

Yet hard the task to heal the bleeding  
heart,

To bid the still-recurring thoughts depart,  
Tame the fierce grief and stem the rising sigh,  
And curb rebellious passion, with reply ;  
Calmly to dwell on all that pleased before,  
And yet to know that all shall please no  
more ;—

Oh ! glorious labour of the soul, to save  
Her captive powers, and bravely mourn the  
brave.

To such these thoughts will lasting comfort  
give—

Life is not measured by the time we live :  
'Tis not an even course of threescore years,  
A life of narrow views and paltry fears,  
Gray hairs and wrinkles and the cares they  
bring,

That take from death the terrors or the sting ;  
But 'tis the gen'rous spirit, mounting high  
Above the world, that native of the sky ;  
The noble spirit, that, in dangers brave,  
Calmly looks on, or looks beyond the grave :—  
Such Manners was, so he resign'd his breath,  
If in a glorious, then a timely death.

Cease then that grief and let those tears  
subside ;

If Passion rule us, be that passion pride ;

If Reason, Reason bids us strive to raise  
Our fallen hearts, and be like him we praise ;  
Or if Affection still the soul subdue,  
Bring all his virtues, all his worth in view,  
And let Affection find its comfort too :  
For how can Grief so deeply wound the  
heart,

When Admiration claims so large a part ?  
Grief is a foe, expel him then thy soul ;  
Let nobler thoughts the nearer views control !  
Oh ! make the age to come thy better care,  
See other Rutlands, other Granbys there !  
And, as thy thoughts through streaming ages  
glide,  
See other heroes die as Manners died :

And from their fate, thy race shall nobler  
grow,  
As trees shoot upwards that are pruned below ;  
Or as old Thames, borne down with decent  
pride,  
Sees his young streams run warbling at his  
side ;  
Though some, by art cut off, no longer run,  
And some are lost beneath the summer's  
sun—  
Yet the pure stream moves on, and, as it  
moves,  
Its power increases and its use improves ;  
While, plenty round its spacious waves bestow,  
Still it flows on, and shall for ever flow.

## NOTES TO 'THE VILLAGE'

Note 1, page 36, lines 60 and 61.

*And, when his age attempts its task in vain,  
With ruthless taunts, of lazy poor complain.*

A pauper who, being nearly past his labour,  
is employed by different masters for a length  
of time, proportioned to their occupations.

Note 2, page 38, lines 44 and 45

*And, waiting long, the crowd retire distress'd,  
To think a poor man's bones should lie unblest'd.*

Some apology is due for the insertion of a  
circumstance by no means common : that it  
has been a subject for complaint in any place  
is a sufficient reason for its being reckoned  
among the evils which may happen to the  
poor, and which must happen to them ex-  
clusively ; nevertheless, it is just to remark  
that such neglect is very rare in any part of  
the kingdom, and in many parts is totally  
unknown.

Note 3, page 40, lines 13 and 14.

*Beloved of Heaven, these humble lines forgive,  
That sing of Thee, and thus aspire to live.*

Lord Robert Manners, the youngest son of  
the Marquis of Granby and the Lady Frances  
Seymour, daughter of Charles Duke of Somers-  
set, was born the 5th of February, 1758 ; and  
was placed with his brother, the late Duke of  
Rutland, at Eton school, where he acquired,  
and ever after retained, a considerable know-  
ledge of the classical authors.

Lord Robert, after going through the duties  
of his profession on board different ships, was  
made captain of the *Resolution*, and com-  
manded her in nine different actions, besides  
the last memorable one on the 2nd of April,  
1782, when, in breaking the French line of  
battle, he received the wounds which ter-  
minated his life, in the twenty-fourth year  
of his age.—*See the Annual Register, printed  
for Mr. Dodsley.*

# THE NEWSPAPER

[1785]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD LORD THURLOW,

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF GREAT BRITAIN; ONE OF HIS  
MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, ETC. ETC.

MY LORD,  
My obligations to your Lordship, great as they are, have not induced me to prefix your name to the following poem: nor is it your Lordship's station, exalted as that is, which prevailed upon me to solicit the honour of your protection for it. But, when I considered your Lordship's great abilities and good taste, so well known and so universally acknowledged, I became anxious for the privilege with which you have indulged me; well knowing that the Public would not be easily persuaded to disregard a performance, marked, in any degree, with your Lordship's approbation.

It is, my Lord, the province of superior rank, in general, to bestow this kind of patronage; but superior talents only can render it valuable. Of the value of your Lordship's I am fully sensible; and, while I make my acknowledgments for that, and for many other favours, I cannot suppress the pride I have in thus publishing my gratitude, and declaring how much I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,  
Your Lordship's most obedient,  
most obliged, and devoted servant,  
GEORGE CRABBE.

*Belvoir Castle,  
February 20, 1785.*

## TO THE READER

THE Poem which I now offer to the public, is, I believe, the only one written on the subject; at least, it is the only one which I have any knowledge of: and, fearing there may not be found in it many things to engage the Reader's attention, I am willing to take the strongest hold I can upon him, by offering something which has the claim of novelty.

When the subject first occurred to me, I meant, in a few lines only, to give some description of that variety of dissociating articles which are huddled together in our Daily Papers. As the thought dwelt upon me, I conceived this might be done methodi-

cally, and with some connection of parts, by taking a larger scope; which notwithstanding I have done, I must still apologise for a want of union and coherence in my poem. Subjects like this will not easily admit of them: we cannot slide from theme to theme in an easy and graceful succession; but, on quitting one thought, there will be an unavoidable hiatus, and in general an awkward transition into that which follows.

That, in writing upon the subject of our Newspapers, I have avoided every thing which might appear like the opinion of a party, is to be accounted for from the knowledge I have



gained from them ; since, the more of these Instructors a man reads, the less he will infallibly understand : nor would it have been very consistent in me, at the same time to censure their temerity and ignorance, and to adopt their rage.

I should have been glad to have made some discrimination in my remarks on these productions. There is, indeed, some difference ; and I have observed, that one editor will sometimes convey his abuse with more decency, and colour his falsehood with more appearance of probability, than another : but until I see that paper, wherein no great character is wantonly abused, nor groundless

insinuation wilfully disseminated, I shall not make any distinction in my remarks upon them.

It must, however, be confessed, that these things have their use ; and are, besides, vehicles of much amusement : but this does not outweigh the evil they do to society, and the irreparable injury they bring upon the characters of individuals. In the following poem I have given those good properties their due weight : they have changed indignation into mirth, and turned, what would otherwise have been abhorrence, into derision.

February, 1785.

## THE NEWSPAPER

E quibus hi vacuas implent sermonibus aures :  
Hi narrata ferunt alio : mensuraque ficti  
(rescit, et auditis aliquid novus adicit auctor :  
Illic Credulitas, illic temerarius Error,  
Vanaque Laetitia est, consternatique Timores,  
Seditioque recens, dubioque auctore Susurri.  
OVID, *Metamorph.* lib. xii. 56-61.

This not a Time favourable to poetical Composition : and why—Newspapers Enemies to Literature, and their general Influence—Their Numbers—The Sunday Monitor—Their general Character—Their Effect upon Individuals—upon Society—in the Country—The Village Freeholder—What Kind of Composition a Newspaper is ; and the Amusement it affords—Of what Parts it is chiefly composed—Articles of Intelligence : Advertisements : The Stage : Quacks : Puffing—The Correspondents to a Newspaper, political and poetical—Advice to the latter—Conclusion.

A TIME like this, a busy, bustling time.  
Suits ill with writers, very ill with rhyme :  
Unheard we sing, when party-rage runs strong,

And mightier madness checks the flowing song:  
Or, should we force the peaceful Muse to wield

Her feeble arms amid the furious field,  
Where party-pens a wordy war maintain,  
Poor is her anger, and her friendship vain ;  
And oft the foes who feel her sting, combine,  
Till serious vengeance pays an idle line ;

For party-poets are like wasps, who dart  
Death to themselves, and to their foes but smart.

Hard then our fate : if general themes we choose,  
Neglect awaits the song, and chills the Muse ;  
Or should we sing the subject of the day,  
To-morrow's wonder puffs our praise away.  
More bless'd the bards of that poetic time,  
When all found readers who could find a rhyme ;

Green grew the bays on every teeming head,  
And Cibber was enthroned, and Settle read.  
Sing, drooping Muse, the cause of thy decline ;  
Why reign no more the once-triumphant Nine ?

Alas ! new charms the wavering many gain,  
And rival sheets the reader's eye detain ;  
A daily swarm, that banish every Muse,  
Come flying forth, and mortals call them

News :

For these, unread, the noblest volumes lie ;  
For these, in sheets unsoil'd, the Muses die ;  
Unbought, unblest'd, the virgin copies wait  
In vain for fame, and sink, unseen, to fate.

Since, then, the town forsakes us for our foes,  
The smoothest numbers for the harshest prose ;

Let us, with generous scorn, the taste deride,  
And sing our rivals with a rival's pride.

Ye gentle poets, who so oft complain  
That foul neglect is all your labours gain ;

That pity only checks your growing spite  
To erring man, and prompts you still to write;  
That your choice works on humble stalls are  
laid,

Or vainly grace the windows of the trade;  
Be ye my friends, if friendship e'er can warm  
Those rival bosoms whom the Muses charm:  
Think of the common cause wherein we go,  
Like gallant Greeks against the Trojan foe;  
Nor let one peevish chief his leader blame,  
Till, crown'd with conquest, we regain our  
fame;

And let us join our forces to subdue  
This bold assuming but successful crew.

I sing of News, and all those rapid sheets  
The rattling hawkers vend through gaping  
streets;

Whate'er their name, whate'er the time they  
fly,

Damp from the press, to charm the reader's  
eye:

For, soon as morning dawns with roseate hue,  
The Herald of the morn arises too;  
Post after Post succeeds, and, all day long,  
Gazettes and Ledgers swarm, a noisy throng.  
When evening comes, she comes with all her  
train

Of Ledgers, Chronicles, and Posts again,  
Like bats, appearing, when the sun goes down,  
From holes obscure and corners of the town.  
Of all these triflers, all like these, I write;  
Oh! like my subject could my song delight,  
The crowd at Lloyd's one poet's nameshould  
raise,

And all the Alley echo to his praise.

In shoals the hours their constant number  
bring,

Like insects waking to th' advancing spring;  
Which take their rise from grubs obscene  
that lie

In shallow pools, or thence ascend the sky;  
Such are these base ephemeras, so born  
To die before the next revolving morn.

Yet thus they differ: insect-tribes are lost  
In the first visit of a winter's frost;  
While these remain, a base but constant  
breed,

Whose swarming sons their short-lived sires  
succeed;

No changing season snakes their number less,  
Nor Sunday shines a sabbath on the press!

Then lo! the sainted Monitor is born,  
Whose pious face some sacred texts adorn:

As artful sinners cloak the secret sin,  
To veil with seeming grace the guile within;  
So Moral Essays on his front appear,  
But all is carnal business in the rear;  
The fresh-coin'd lie, the secret whisper'd last,  
And all the gleanings of the six days past.

With these retired, through half the Sab-  
bath-day,

The London-lounger yawns his hours away:  
Not so, my little flock! your preacher fly,  
Nor waste the time now, worldly wealth can buy;  
But let the decent maid and sober clown  
Pray for these idlers of the sinful town:  
This day, at least, on nobler themes bestow,  
Nor give to Woodfall, or the world below.

But, Sunday pass'd, what numbers flourish  
then,

What wond'rous labours of the press and pen!  
Diurnal most, some thrice each week affords,  
Some only once,—O avarice of words!  
When thousand starving minds such manna  
seek,<sup>1</sup>

To drop the precious food but once a week.

Endless it were to sing the powers of all,  
Their names, their numbers; how they rise  
and fall:

Like baneful herbs the gazer's eye they seize,  
Rush to the head, and poison where they  
please:

Like idle flies, a busy, buzzing train,  
They drop their maggots in the trifer's brain:  
That genial soil receives the fruitful store,  
And there they grow, and breed a thousand  
more.

Now be their arts display'd, how first they  
choose

A cause and party, as the bard his muse;  
Inspired by these, with clamorous zeal they  
cry,

And through the town their dreams and omens  
fly:

So the Sibylline leaves were blown about;<sup>2</sup>  
Disjointed scraps of fate involved in doubt;  
So idle dreams, the journals of the night,  
Are right and wrong by turns, and mingle  
wrong with right.—

Some champions for the rights that prop the  
crown,

Some sturdy patriots, sworn to pull them  
down;

Some neutral powers, with secret forces  
fraught,

Wishing for war, but willing to be bought:

While some to every side and party go,  
Shift every friend, and join with every foe;  
Like sturdy rogues in privateers, they strike  
This side and that, the foes of both alike;  
A traitor-crew, who thrive in troubled times,  
Fear'd for their force, and courted for their  
crimes.

Chief to the prosperous side the numbers  
sail,

Fickle and false, they veer with every gale;  
As birds that migrate from a freezing shore,  
In search of warmer climes, come skimming  
o'er,

Some bold adventurers first prepare to try  
The doubtful sunshine of the distant sky;  
But soon the growing Summer's certain sun  
Wins more and more, till all at last are won:  
So, on the early prospect of disgrace,  
Fly in vast troops this apprehensive race;  
Instinctive tribes! their failing food they  
dread,

And buy, with timely change, their future  
bread.

Such are our guides; how many a peaceful  
head,

Born to be still, have they to wrangling led!  
How many an honest zealot, stol'n from trade,  
And factious tools of pious pastors made!  
With clews like these they tread the maze of  
state,

These oracles explore, to learn our fate;  
Pleased with the guides who can so well  
deceive,

Who cannot lie so fast as they believe.

Oft lend I, loth, to some sage friend an  
ear,

(For we who will not speak are doom'd to  
hear);

While he, bewilder'd, tells his anxious thought,  
Infectious fear from tainted scribblers caught,  
Or idiot hope; for each his mind assails,  
As Lloyd's court-light or Stockdale's gloom  
prevails.

Yet stand I patient while but one declaims,  
Or gives dull comments on the speech he  
maims:

But oh! ye Muses, keep your votary's feet  
From tavern-haunts where politicians meet;  
Where rector, doctor, and attorney pause,  
First on each parish, then each public cause:  
Indited roads and rates that still increase;  
The murmuring poor, who will not fast in  
peace;

Election-zeal and friendship, since declined;  
A tax commuted, or a tithe in kind;  
The Dutch and Germans kindling into strife;  
Dull port and poachers vile! the serious ills  
of life.

Here comes the neighbouring justice,  
pleased to guide

His little club, and in the chair preside.  
In private business his commands prevail,  
On public themes his reasoning turns the  
scale;

Assenting silence soothes his happy ear,  
And, in or out, his party triumphs here.

Nor here th' infectious rage for party stops,  
But fits along from palaces to shops;  
Our weekly journals o'er the land abound,  
And spread their plague and influenzas round;  
The village, too, the peaceful, pleasant plain,  
Breeds the Whig-farmer and the Tory-swain;  
Brookes' and St. Alban's boasts not, but,  
instead,

Stares the Red Ram, and swings the Rodney's  
Head:—

Hither, with all a patriot's care, comes he  
Who owns the little hut that makes him free;  
Whose yearly forty shillings buy the smile  
Of mighty men, and never waste the while;  
Who feels his freehold's worth, and looks  
elate,

A little prop and pillar of the state.

Here he delights the weekly news to con,  
And mingle comments as he blunders on;  
To swallow all their varying authors teach,  
To spell a title, and confound a speech:  
Till with a muddled mind he quits the news,  
And claims his nation's licence to abuse;  
Then joins the cry, 'That all the courtly  
race

Are venal candidates for power and place;  
' Yet feels some joy, amid the general vice,  
That his own vote will bring its wonted price.

These are the ills the teeming press supplies,  
The poisonous springs from learning's foun-  
tain rise;

Not there the wise alone their entrance find,  
Imparting useful light to mortals blind;  
But, blind themselves, these erring guides  
hold out

Alluring lights, to lead us far about;  
Screen'd by such means, here Scandal whets  
her quill,

Here Slander shoots unseen, whene'er she  
will;

Here Fraud and Falsehood labour to deceive,  
And Folly aids them both, impatient to believe.

Such, sons of Britain! are the guides ye trust;

So wise their counsel, their reports so just:—  
Yet, though we cannot call their morals pure,  
Their judgment nice, or their decisions sure;  
Merit they have to mightier works unknown,  
A style, a manner, and a fate their own.

We, who for longer fame with labour strive,  
Are pain'd to keep our sickly works alive;  
Studious we toil, with patient care refine,  
Nor let our love protect one languid line.  
Severe ourselves, at last our works appear,  
When, ah! we find our readers more severe;  
For after all our care and pains, how few  
Acquire applause, or keep it if they do!—

Not so these sheets, ordain'd to happier fate,

Praised through their day, and but that day  
their date;

Their careless authors only strive to join  
As many words, as make an even line;<sup>3</sup>  
As many lines, as fill a row complete;  
As many rows, as furnish up a sheet:  
From side to side, with ready types they run,  
The measure's ended, and the work is done;  
Oh, born with ease, how envied and how blest!

Your fate to-day and your to-morrow's rest.  
To you all readers turn, and they can look  
Pleased on a paper, who abhor a book;  
Those, who ne'er deign'd their Bible to peruse,  
Would think it hard to be denied their news;  
Sinners and saints, the wisest with the weak,  
Here mingle tastes, and one amusement seek;  
This, like the public inn, provides a treat,  
Where each promiscuous guest sits down to eat;

And such this mental food, as we may call  
Something to all men, and to some men all.

Next, in what rare production shall we trace  
Such various subjects in so small a space?  
As the first ship upon the waters bore  
Incongruous kinds who never met before;  
Or as some curious virtuoso joins,  
In one small room, moths, minerals, and coins,  
Birds, beasts, and fishes; nor refuse place  
To serpents, toads, and all the reptile race;  
So here, compress'd within a single sheet,  
Great things and small, the mean and mighty meet:

'Tis this which makes all Europe's business known,

Yet here a private man may place his own;  
And, where he reads of Lords and Commons, he  
May tell their honours that he sells rappee.

Add next th' amusement which the motley page

Affords to either sex and every age:

Lo! where it comes before the cheerful fire,—  
Damp; from the press in smoky curls aspire  
(As from the earth the sun exhales the dew),  
Ere we can read the wonders that ensue:  
Then eager every eye surveys the part,  
That brings its favourite subject to the heart;  
Grave politicians look for facts alone,  
And gravely add conjectures of their own:  
The sprightly nymph, who never broke her rest

For tottering crowns, or mighty lands oppress'd,

Finds broils and battles, but neglects them all  
For songs and suits, a birth-day, or a ball:  
The keen warm man o'erlooks each idle tale  
For 'Money's wanted,' and 'Estates on Sale,'  
While some with equal minds to all attend,  
Pleased with each part, and grieved to find  
an end.

So charm the News; but we, who, far  
from town,

Wait till the postman brings the packet down,  
Once in the week, a vacant day behold,  
And stay for tidings, till they're three days  
old:

That day arrives; no welcome post appears,  
But the dull morn a sullen aspect wears;  
We meet, but ah! without our wonted smile,  
To talk of headaches, and complain of bile;  
Sullen we ponder o'er a dull repast,  
Nor feast the body while the mind must fast.

A master-passion is the love of news,  
Nor music so commands, nor so the Muse:  
Give poets claret, they grow idle soon;  
Feed the musician, and he's out of tune;  
But the sick mind, of this disease possess'd,  
Flies from all cure, and sickens when at rest.

Now sing, my Muse, what various parts  
compose

These rival sheets of politics and prose.

First, from each brother's hoard a part they  
draw,

A mutual theft that never fear'd a law;  
Whate'er they gain, to each man's portion fall,  
And read it once, you read it through them all;

For this their runners ramble day and night,  
To drag each lurking deed to open light;  
For daily bread the dirty trade they ply,  
Coin their fresh tales, and live upon the lie:  
Like bees for honey, forth for news they  
spring,—

Industrious creatures! ever on the wing;  
Home to their several cells they bear the  
store,

Cull'd of all kinds, then roam abroad for more.

No anxious virgin flies to 'fair Tweed-  
side';

No injured husband mourns his faithless  
bride;

No duel dooms the fiery youth to bleed;  
But through the town transpires each  
vent'rous deed.

Should some fair frail-one drive her pranc-  
ing pair,

Where rival peers contend to please the fair;  
When, with new force, she aids her conquering  
eyes,

And beauty decks, with all that beauty buys;  
Quickly we learn whose heart her influence  
feels,

Whose acres melt before her glowing wheels.

To these a thousand idle themes succeed,  
Deeds of all kinds, and comments to each deed.  
Here stocks, the state-barometers, we view,  
That rise or fall, by causes known to few;  
Promotion's ladder who goes up or down;  
Who wed, or who seduced, amuse the town;  
What new-born heir has made his father blest;  
What heir exults, his father now at rest;  
That ample list the Tyburn-herald gives,  
And each known knave, who still for Tyburn  
lives.

So grows the work, and now the printer tries  
His powers no more, but leans on his allies.

When lo! the advertising tribe succeed,  
Pay to be read, yet find but few will read;  
And chief th' illustrious race, whose drops  
and pills

Have patent powers to vanquish human ills:  
These, with their cures, a constant aid re-  
main,

To bless the pale composer's fertile brain;  
Fertile it is, but still the noblest soil  
Requires some pause, some intervals from  
toil;

And they at least a certain ease obtain  
From Katterfelto's skill, and Graham's  
glowing strain.

I too must aid, and pay to see my name  
Hung in these dirty avenues to fame;  
Nor pay in vain, if aught the Muse has seen,  
And sung, could make those avenues more  
clean;

Could stop one slander ere it found its way,  
And gave to public scorn its helpless prey.  
By the same aid, the Stage invites her friends,  
And kindly tells the banquet she intends;  
Thither from real life the many run,  
With Siddons weep, or laugh with Abingdon;  
Pleased in fictitious joy or grief, to see  
The mimic passion with their own agree;  
To steal a few enchanted hours away

From care, and drop the curtain on the day,  
But who can steal from self that wretched  
wight,

Whose darling work is tried, some fatal  
night?

Most wretched man! when, bane to every  
bliss,

He hears the serpent-critic's rising hiss;  
Then groans succeed: not traitors on the  
wheel

Can feel like him, or have such pangs to feel.  
Nor end they here: next day he reads his fall  
In every paper; critics are they all;  
He sees his branded name, with wild affright,  
And hears again the cat-calls of the night.

Such help the stage affords: a larger  
space

Is fill'd by puffs and all the puffing race.  
Physic had once alone the lofty style,  
The well-known boast, that ceased to raise a  
smile:

Now all the province of that tribe invade,  
And we abound in quacks of every trade.

The simple barber, once an honest name,  
Cervantes founded, Fielding raised his fame:  
Barber no more—a gay perfumer comes,  
On whose soft cheek his own cosmetic blooms;  
Here he appears, each simple mind to move,  
And advertises beauty, grace, and love.

—'Come, faded belles, who would your youth  
renew,

And learn the wonders of Olympian dew;  
Restore the roses that begin to faint,  
Nor think celestial washes vulgar paint;  
Your former features, airs, and arts assume,  
Circassian virtues, with Circassian Doom.

—Come, batter'd beaux, whose locks are  
turn'd to grey,

And crop Discretion's lying badge away;

Read where they vend these smart engaging things,

These flaxen frontlets with elastic springs ;  
No female eye the fair deception sees,  
Not Nature's self so natural as these.'

Such are their arts, but not confined to them,  
The Muse impartial must her sons condemn :  
For they, degenerate ! join the venal throng,  
And puff a lazy Pegasus along :

More guilty these, by Nature less design'd  
For little arts that suit the vulgar-kind ;—  
That barbers' boys, who would to trade  
advance,

Wish us to call them, smart Friseurs from  
France ;

That he who builds a chop-house, on his door  
Paints ' The true old original Blue Boar ! '

These are the arts by which a thousand live,  
Where Truth may smile, and Justice may  
forgive :

But when, amid this rabble-rout, we find  
A puffing poet to his honour blind ;  
Who silly drops quotations all about,  
Packet or Post, and points their merit out ;  
Who advertises what reviewers say,  
With sham editions every second day ;  
Who dares not trust his praises out of sight,  
But hurries into fame with all his might ;  
Although the verse some transient praise  
obtains,

Contempt is all the anxious poet gains.

Now puffs exhausted, advertisements past,  
Their correspondents stand exposed at last ;  
These are a numerous tribe, to fame unknown,  
Who for the public good forego their own ;  
Who volunteers in paper-war engage,  
With double portion of their party's rage :  
Such are the Bruti, Decii, who appear  
Wooing the printer for admission here ;  
Whose generous souls can condescend to pray  
For leave to throw their precious time away.

Oh ! cruel Woodfall ! when a patriot  
draws

His grey-goose quill in his dear country's  
cause,

To vex and maul a ministerial race,  
Can thy stern soul refuse the champion  
place ?

Alas ! thou know'st not with what anxious  
heart

He longs his best-loved labours to impart ;  
How he has sent them to thy brethren round,  
And still the same unkind reception found :

At length indignant will he damn the state,  
Turn to his trade, and leave us to our fate.

These Roman souls, like Rome's great sons,  
are known

To live in cells on labours of their own.  
Thus Milo, could we see the noble chief,  
Feeds, for his country's good, on legs of beef :  
Camillus copies deeds for sordid pay,  
Yet fights the public battles twice a day :  
E'en now the godlike Brutus views his score  
Scroll'd on the bar-board, swinging with the  
door ;

Where, tipping punch, grave Cato's self you'll  
see,

And *Amor Patriæ* vending smuggled tea.

Last in these ranks, and least, their art's dis-  
grace,

Neglected stand the Muses' meanest race ;  
Scribblers who court contempt, whose verse  
the eye

Disdainful views, and glances swiftly by :  
This Poet's Corner is the place they choose,  
A fatal nursery for an infant Muse ;  
Unlike that corner where true poets lie,  
These cannot live, and they shall never die ;  
Hapless the lad whose mind such dreams in-  
vade,

And win to verse the talents due to trade  
Curb then, O youth ! these raptures as they  
rise,

Keep down the evil spirit and be wise ;  
Follow your calling, think the Muses foes,  
Nor lean upon the pestle and compose.

I know your day-dreams, and I know the  
snare

Hid in your flow'ry path, and cry ' Beware.'  
Thoughtless of ill, and to the future  
blind,

A sudden couplet rushes on your mind ;  
Hefe you may nameless print your idle  
rhymes,  
And read your first-born work a thousand  
times ;

Th' infection spreads, your couplet grows  
apace,

Stanzas to Delia's dog or Celia's face :  
You take a name ; Philander's odes are seen,  
Printed, and praised, in every magazine :  
Diarian sages greet their brother sage,  
And your dark pages please th' enlighten'd  
age.—

Alas ! what years you thus consume in vain,  
Ruled by this wretched bias of the brain !

Go! to your desks and counters all return;  
Your sonnets scatter, your acrostics burn;  
Trade, and be rich; or, should your careful  
sires

Bequeath you wealth! indulge the nobler  
fires:

Should love of fame your youthful heart  
betray,

Pursue fair fame, but in a glorious way,  
Nor in the idle scenes of Fancy's painting  
stray.

Of all the good that mortal men pursue,  
The Muse has least to give, and gives to few;  
Like some coquettish fair, she leads us on,  
With smiles and hopes, till youth and peace  
are gone;

Then, wed for life, the restless wrangling pair  
Forget how constant one, and one how fair:

Meanwhile, Ambition, like a blooming bride,  
Brings power and wealth to grace her lover's  
side;

And though she smiles not with such flattering  
charms,

The brave will sooner win her to their arms.

Then wed to her, if Virtue tie the bands,  
Go spread your country's fame in hostile  
lands;

Her court, her senate, or her arms adorn,  
And let her foes lament that you were born:  
Or weigh her laws, their ancient rights de-  
fend,

Though hosts oppose, be theirs and Reason's  
friend;

Arm'd with strong powers, in their defence  
engage,

And rise the Thurlow of the future age.

## NOTES TO 'THE NEWSPAPER'

Note 1, page 44, line 61.

*When thousand starving minds such manna  
seek.*

The Manna of Day.—Green's *Spleen*.

Note 2, page 44, line 75.

*So the Sibylline leaves were blown about.*

... in foliis descripsit carmina Virgo;—  
... et teneras turbavit ianua frondes.

VIRG. *Aeneid*, lib. iii. 445, 449.

Note 3, page 46, lines 20, 21, and 22.

*As many words, as make an even line;  
As many lines, as fill a row complete;  
As many rows, as furnish up a sheet.*

How many hours bring about the day,  
How many days will furnish up the year,  
How many years a mortal man may live, &c.

Shakspeare's *Henry VI*, Part III, Act II.  
Sc. 5.

# THE PARISH REGISTER

## IN THREE PARTS

[1807]

### INTRODUCTION.

The Village Register considered, as containing principally the Annals of the Poor—State of the Peasantry as meliorated by Frugality and Industry—The Cottage of an industrious Peasant; its Ornaments—Prints and Books—The Garden; its Satisfaction—The State of the Poor, when improvident and vicious—The Row or Street, and its Inhabitants—The Dwelling of one of these—A Public House—Garden and its Appendages—Gamesters; rustic Sharpers, &c.—Conclusion of Introductory Part.

### PART I. BAPTISMS

Tum porro puer (ut saevis projectus ab undis,  
Navita) nudus humi jacet infans, indigus omni  
Vitali auxilio, ——— . . . . .  
Vagituque locum lugubri complet, ut aequum  
est,

Cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum.

LUCRET. *de Nat. Rerum*, lib. 5, vv. 223-5  
and 227-8. <sup>1</sup>

The Child of the Miller's Daughter, and Relation of her Misfortune—A frugal Couple: their Kind of Frugality—Plea of the Mother of a natural Child: her Churching—Large Family of Gerard Ablett: his Apprehensions: Comparison between his State and that of the wealthy Farmer his Master: his Consolation—An old Man's Anxiety for an Heir: the Jealousy of another on having many—Characters of the Grocer Dawkins and his Friend: their different Kinds of Disappointment—Three Infants named—An Orphan Girl and Village Schoolmistress—Gardener's Child: Pedantry and Conceit of the Father: his Botanical Discourse: Method of fixing the Embryo-fruit of Cucumbers—Absurd Effects of Rustic Vanity: observed in the Names of their Children—Relation of the Vestry Debate on a Foundling: Sir Richard Monday—Children of various Inhabitants—The poor Farmer—Children of a Profligate: his Character and Fate—Conclusion.

THE year revolves, and I again explore  
The simple annals of my parish poor;

What infant-members in my flock appear,  
What pairs I bless'd in the departed year;  
And who, of old or young, or nymphs or swains,

Are lost to life, its pleasures and its pains.

No Muse I ask, before my view to bring  
The humble actions of the swains I sing.—  
How pass'd the youthful, how the old their days;

Who sank in sloth, and who aspired to praise;  
Their tempers, manners, morals, customs, arts,

What parts they had, and how they 'mploy'd  
their parts;

By what elated, soothed, seduced, depress'd,  
Full well I know—these records give the rest.

Is there a place, save one the poet sees,  
A land of love, of liberty and ease;

Where labour wearies not, nor cares suppress  
Th' eternal flow of rustic happiness;

Where no proud mansion frowns in awful  
state,

Or keeps the sunshine from the cottage-gate;  
Where young and old, intent on pleasure,  
throng,

And half man's life is holiday and song?

Vain search for scenes like these! no view  
appears,

By sighs unruddled or unstain'd by tears;  
Since vice the world subdued and waters  
drown'd,

Auburn and Eden can no more be found.

<sup>1</sup> For the identification of many of the quotations prefixed to the various parts of *The Parish Register* and *The Borough* we are indebted to the valuable edition of Dr. A. W. Ward.



Hence good and evil mix'd, but man has skill  
And power to part them, when he feels the will !  
Toil, care, and patience bless th' abstemious few,  
Fear, shame, and want the thoughtless herd pursue.

Behold the cot ! where thrives-th' industrious swain,  
Source of his pride, his pleasure, and his gain ;  
Screen'd from the winter's wind, the sun's last ray

Smiles on the window and prolongs the day ;  
Projecting thatch the woodbine's branches stop,

And turn their blossoms to the casement's top :  
All need requires is in that cot contain'd,  
And much that taste untaught and unrestrain'd

Surveys delighted ; there she loves to trace,  
In one gay picture, all the royal race ;  
Around the walls are heroes, lovers, kings ;  
The print that shows them and the verse that sings.

Here the last Lewis on his throne is seen,  
And there he stands imprison'd, and his queen ;

To these the mother takes her child, and shows  
What grateful duty to his God he owes ;  
Who gives to him a happy home, where he  
Lives and enjoys his freedom with the free ;  
When kings and queens, dethroned, insulted,  
tried,

Are all these blessings of the poor denied.

There is King Charles, and all his Golden Rules,

Who proved Misfortune's was the best of schools :

And there his son, who, tried by years of pain,  
Proved that misfortunes may be sent in vain.

The magic-mill that grinds the gran'ams young,

Close at the side of kind Godiva hung ;  
She, of her favourite place the pride and joy,  
Of charms at once most lavish and most coy,  
By wanton act, the purest fame could raise,  
And give the boldest deed the chastest praise.

There stands the stoutest Ox in England fed ;

There fights the boldest Jew, Whitechapel bred ;

And here Saint Monday's worthy votaries live,

In all the joys that ale and skittles give.

Now lo ! in Egypt's coast that hostile fleet,  
By nations dreaded and by Nelson beat ;  
And here shall soon another triumph come,  
A deed of glory in a day of gloom ;  
Distressing glory ! grievous boon of fate !  
The proudest conquest, at the dearest rate.

On shelf of deal beside the cuckoo-clock,  
Of cottage-reading rests the chosen stock ;  
Learning we lack, not books, but have a kind  
For all our wants, a meat for every mind :  
The tale for wonder and the joke for whim,  
The half-sun sermon and the half-groan'd hymn.

No need of classing ; each within its place,  
The feeling finger in the dark can trace ;  
' First from the corner, farthest from the wall,'  
Such all the rules, and they suffice for all.

There pious works for Sunday's use are found ;

Companions for that Bible newly bound ;  
That Bible, bought by sixpence weekly saved,  
Has choicest prints by famous hands engraved ;

Has choicest notes by many a famous head,  
Such as to doubt have rustic readers led ;  
Have made them stop to reason *why* ? and *how* ?

And, where they once agreed, to cavil now.  
Oh ! rather give me commentators plain,  
Who with no deep researches vex the brain ;

Who from the dark and doubtful love to run,

And hold their glimmering tapers to the sun ;

Who simple truth with nine-fold reason back,

And guard the point no enemies attack.

Bunyan's famed Pilgrim rests that shelf upon ;

A genius rare but rude was honest John :  
Not one who, early by the Muse beguiled,  
Drank from her well the waters undefiled ;  
Not one who slowly gain'd the hill sublime,  
Then often sipp'd and little at a time ;  
But one who dabbled in the sacred springs,  
And drank them maddy, mix'd with baser things.

Here to interpret dreams we read the rules,  
Science our own ! and never taught in schools ;

In moles and specks we Fortune's gifts discern,  
And Fate's fix'd will from Nature's wander-  
ings learn.

Of Hermit Quarle we read, in island rare,  
Far from mankind and seeming far from care;  
Safe from all want, and sound in every limb;  
Yes! there was he, and there was care with  
him.

Unbound and heap'd, these valued works  
beside,  
Lay humbler works, the pedler's pack sup-  
plied;

Yet these, long since, have all acquired a  
name;

The Wandering Jew has found his way\* to  
fame;

And fame, denied to many a labour'd song,  
Crowns Thumb the great, and Hickerthrift  
the strong.

There too is he, by wizard-power upheld,  
Jack, by whose arm the giant-brood were  
quell'd:

His shoes of swiftness on his feet he placed;  
His coat of darkness on his loins he braced;  
His sword of sharpness in his hand he took,  
And off the heads of doughty giants stroke:  
Their glaring eyes beheld no mortal near;  
No sound of feet alarm'd the drowsy ear;  
No English blood their pagan sense could  
smell,

But heads dropp'd headlong, wondering why  
they fell.

These are the peasant's joy, when, placed  
at ease,

Half his delighted offspring mount his knees.

To every cot the lord's indulgent mind  
Has a small space for garden-ground assign'd;  
Here—till return of morn dismiss'd the farm—  
The careful peasant plies the sinewy arm,  
Warm'd as he works, and casts his look around  
On every foot of that improving ground:  
It is his own he sees; his master's eye  
Peers not about, some secret fault to spy;  
Nor voice severe is there, nor censure  
known;—

Hope, profit, pleasure,—they are all his own.  
Here grow the humble cives, and, hard by  
them,

The leek with crown globose and reedy  
stem;

High climb his pulse in many an even row,  
Deep strike the ponderous roots in soil  
below;

And herbs of potent smell and pungent  
taste

Give a warm relish to the night's repast.  
Apples and cherries grafted by his hand,  
And cluster'd nuts for neighbouring market  
stand.

Nor thus concludes his labour; near the  
cot,

The reed-fencer rises round some fav'rite spot;  
Where rich carnations, pinks with purple eyes,  
Proud hyacinths, the least some florist's prize,  
Tulips tall-stemm'd and pounced auriculas  
rise.

Here on a Sunday-eve, when service ends,  
Meet and rejoice a family of friends;  
All speak aloud, are happy and are free,  
And glad they seem, and gaily they agree.

What, though fastidious ears may shun the  
speech,

Where all are talkers and where none can  
teach;

Where still the welcome and the words are old,  
And the same stories are for ever told;  
Yet theirs is joy that, bursting from the heart,  
Prompts the glad tongue these nothings to  
impart;

That forms these tones of gladness we despise,  
That lifts their steps, that sparkles in their  
eyes;

That talks or laughs or runs or shouts or plays,  
And speaks in all their looks and all their  
ways.

Fair scenes of peace! ye might detain us  
long,

But vice and misery now demand the song;  
And turn our view from dwellings simply  
neat,

To this infected row, we term our street.

Here, in cabal, a disputatious crew  
Each evening meet; the sot, the cheat, the  
shrew:

Riots are nightly heard:—the curse, the cries  
Of beaten wife, perverse in her replies;  
Whiles shrieking children hold each threat'ning  
hand,

And sometimes life, and sometimes food de-  
mand:

Boys, in their first-stol'n rags, to swear begin,  
And girls, who heed not dress, are skill'd in gin:  
Snarers and smugglers here their gains divide;  
Ensnaring females here their victims hide;  
And here is one, the sibyl of the row,  
Who knows all secrets, or affects to know.

Seeking their fate, to her the simple run,  
To her the guilty, theirs awhile to shun ;  
Mistress of worthless arts, depraved in will,  
Her care unblest'd and unrepaid her skill,  
Slave to the tribe, to whose command she  
stoops,

And poorer than the poorest maid she dupes.

Between the road-way and the walls, offence  
Invades all eyes and strikes on every sense :  
There lie, obscene, at every open door,  
Heaps from the hearth and sweepings from  
the floor,

And day by day the mingled masses grow,  
As sinks are disemboved and kennels flow.

There hungry dogs from hungry children  
steal,

There pigs and chickens quarrel for a meal;  
There dropst infants wail without redress,  
And all is want and wo and wretchedness :  
Yet should these boys, with bodies bronzed  
and bare,

High-swoln and hard, outlive that lack of  
care—

Forced on some farm, the unexerted strength,  
Though loth to action, is compell'd at length,  
When warm'd by health, as serpents in the  
spring,

Aside their slough of indolence they fling.

Yet, ere they go, a greater evil comes—  
See ! crowded beds in those contiguous  
rooms ;

Beds but ill parted, by a paltry screen  
Of paper'd lath or curtain dropp'd between ;  
Daughters and sons to yon compartments  
creep,

And parents here beside their children sleep :  
Ye who have power, these thoughtless people  
part,

Nor let the ear be first to taint the heart.

Come ! search within, nor sight nor smell  
regard ;

The true physician walks the foulest ward.  
See ! on the floor what frouzy patches rest !  
What nauseous fragments on yon fractured  
chest !

What downy dust beneath yon window-seat !  
And round these posts that serve this bed for  
feet ;

This bed where all those tatter'd garments lie,  
Worn by each sex, and now perforce thrown  
by !

See ! as we gaze, an infant lifts its head,  
Left by neglect and burrow'd in that bed ;

The mother-gossip has the love suppress'd  
An infant's cry once waken'd in her breast ;  
And daily prattles, as her round she takes,  
(With strong resentment) of the want she  
makes.

Whence all these woes ?—From want of  
virtuous will,

Of honest shame, of time-improving skill ;  
From want of care t'employ the vacant hour,  
And want of ev'ry kind but want of power.

Here are no wheels for either wool or flax,  
But packs of cards—made up of sundry packs ;  
Here is no clock, nor will they turn the glass,  
And see how swift th' important moments  
pass ;

Here are no books, but ballads on the wall,  
Are some abusive, and indecent all ;  
Pistols are here, unpair'd ; with nets and  
hooks,

Of every kind, for rivers, ponds, and brooks ;  
An ample flask, that nightly rovers fill  
With recent poison from the Dutchman's  
still ;

A box of tools, with wires of various size,  
Frocks, wigs, and hats, for night or day dis-  
guise,

And bludgeons stout to gain or guard a prize.

To every house belongs a space of ground,  
Of equal size, once fenced with paling round ;  
That paling now by slothful waste destroy'd,  
Dead gorse and stumps of elder fill the void ;  
Save in the centre-spot, whose walls of clay  
Hide sots and striplings at their drink or play :  
Within, a board, beneath a tiled retreat,  
Allures the bubble and maintains the cheat ;  
Where heavy ale in spots like varnish shows,  
Where chalky tallies yet remain in rows ;  
Black pipes and broken jugs the seats defile,  
The walls and windows, rhymes and reck'nings  
vile ;

Prints of the meanest kind disgrace the door,  
And cards, in curses torn, lie fragments on  
the floor.

Here his poor bird th' inhuman cocker  
brings,

Arms his hard heel and clips his golden wings ;  
With spicy food th' impatient spirit feeds,  
And shouts and curses as the battle bleeds.  
Struck through the brain, deprived of both  
his eyes,

The vanquish'd bird must combat till he dies ;  
Must faintly peck at his victorious foe,  
And reel and stagger at each feeble blow :

When fall'n, the savage grasps his dabbled plumes,  
His blood-stain'd arms, for other deaths assumes ;

And damns the craven fowl, that lost his stake,  
And only bled and perish'd for his sake.

Such are our peasants, those to whom we yield

Praise with relief, the fathers of the field ;  
And these who take from our reluctant hands,  
What Burn advises or the Bench commands.

Our farmers round, well pleased with constant gain,  
Like other farmers, flourish and complain.—  
These are our groups; our portraits next appear,  
And close our exhibition for the year.

WITH evil omen we that year begin :

A Child of Shame,—stern Justice adds, of Sin,  
Is first recorded ;—I would hide the deed,  
But vain the wish ; I sigh and I proceed :  
And could I well th' instructive truth convey,  
'Twould warn the giddy and awake the gay.

Of all the nymphs who gave our village grace,

The Miller's daughter had the fairest face :  
Proud was the Miller; money was his pride;  
He rode to market, as our farmers ride,  
And 'twas his boast, inspired by spirits, there,  
His favourite Lucy should be rich as fair ;  
But she must meek and still obedient prove,  
And not presume, without his leave, to love.

A youthful Sailor heard him ;—' Ha !'  
quothe he,

' This Miller's maiden is a prize for me ;  
Her charms I love, his riches I desire,  
And all his threats but fan the kindling fire ;  
My ebbing purse no more the foe shall fill,  
But Love's kind act and Lucy at the mill.'

Thus thought the youth, and soon the chase began,  
Stretch'd all his sail, nor thought of pause or plan :

His trusty staff in his bold hand he took,  
Like him and like his frigate, heart of oak ;  
Fresh were his features, his attire was new ;  
Clean was his linen, and his jacket blue :  
Of finest jean, his trowsers, tight and trim,  
Brush'd the large buckle at the silver rim.

He soon arriv'd ; he traced the village-green,  
There saw the maid, and was with pleasure seen ;

Then talk'd of love, till Lucy's yielding heart  
Confess'd 'twas painful, though 'twas right to part.

' For ah ! my father has a haughty soul ;  
Whom best he loves, he loves but to control ;  
Me to some churl in bargain he'll consign,  
And make some tyrant of the parish mine :  
Cold is his heart, and he with looks severe  
Has often forced but never shed the tear ;  
Save, when my mother died, some drops express'd

A kind of sorrow for a wife at rest :—  
To me a master's stern regard is shown,  
I'm like his steed, prized highly as his own ;  
Stroked but corrected, threaten'd when supplied,

Hisslave and boast, his victim and his pride.'

' Cheer up, my lass ! I'll to thy father go,  
The Miller cannot be the Sailor's foe ;  
Both live by Heaven's free gale, that plays aloud

In the stretch'd canvas and the piping shroud ;  
The rush of winds, the flapping sails above,  
And rattling planks within, a sounds we love ;  
Calms are our dread ; when tempests plough the deep,

We take a reef, and to the rocking sleep.'

' Ha !' quoth the Miller, moved at speech so rash,

' Art thou like me ? then where thy notes and cash ?

Away to Wapping and a wife command,  
With all thy wealth, a guinea, in thine hand ;  
There with thy messmates quaff the muddy cheer,

And leave my Lucy for thy betters here.'

' Revenge ! revenge !' the angry lover cried,

Then sought the nymph, and ' Be thou now my bride.'

Bride had she been, but they no priest could move

To bind in law, the couple bound by love.

What sought these lovers then by day, by night ?

But stolen moments of disturb'd delight ;  
Soft trembling tumults, terrors dearly prized,  
Transports that pain'd, and joys that agonized :  
Till the fond damsel, pleased with lad so trim,  
Awed by her parent, and enticed by him,  
Her lovely form from savage power to save,  
Gave—not her hand—but ALL she could, she gave.

Then came the day of shame, the grievous night,  
The varying look, the wandering appetite;  
The joy assumed, while sorrow dimm'd the eyes,  
The forced sad smiles that follow'd sudden sighs;  
And every art, long used, but used in vain,  
To hide thy progress, Nature, and thy pain.

Too eager caution shows some danger's near,  
The bully's bluster proves the coward's fear;  
His sober step the drunkard vainly tries,  
And nymphs expose the failings they disguise.

First, whispering gossips were in parties seen;  
Then louder Scandal walk'd the village-green;  
Next babbling Folly told the growing ill,  
And busy Malice dropp'd it at the mill.

'Go! to thy curse and mine,' the Father said,  
'Strife and confusion stalk around thy bed;  
Want and a wailing brat thy portion be,  
Plague to thy fondness, as thy fault to me;—  
Where skulks the villain?'—

—'On the ocean wide  
My William seeks a portion for his bride.'—  
'Vain be his search! but, till the traitor come,

The higgler's cottage be thy future home;  
There with his ancient shrew and care abide,  
And hide thy head,—thy shame thou canst not hide.'

Day after day was pass'd in pains and grief;

Week follow'd week,—and still was no relief:  
Her boy was born—no lads nor lasses came  
To grace the rite or give the child a name;  
Nor grave conceited nurse, of office proud,  
Bore the young Christian roaring through the crowd:

In a small chamber was my office done,  
Where blinks through paper'd panes the setting sun;

Where noisy sparrows, perch'd on penthouse near,  
Chirp tuneless joy, and mock the frequent tear;

Bats on their webby wings in darkness move,  
And feebly shriek their melancholy love.

No Sailor came; the months in terror fled!  
Then news arrived—He fought, and he was DEAD!

At the lone cottage Lucy lives, and still  
Walks for her weekly pittance to the mill;  
A mean seraglio there her father keeps,  
Whose mirth insults her, as she stands and weeps;

And sees the plenty, while compell'd to stay,  
Her father's pride, become his harlot's prey.  
Throughout the lanes she glides, at evening's close,

And softly lulls her infant to repose;  
Then sits and gazes, but with viewless look,  
As gilds the moon the rippling of the brook;  
And sings her vespers, but in voice so low,  
She hears their murmurs as the waters flow:  
And she too murmurs, and begins to find  
The solemn wanderings of a wounded mind:  
Visions of terror, views of wo succeed,  
The mind's impatience, to the body's need;  
By turns to that, by turns to this a prey,  
She knows what reason yields, and dreads what madness may.

Next, with their boy, a decent couple came,  
And call'd him Robert, 'twas his father's name;

Three girls preceded, all by time endear'd,  
And future births were neither hoped nor fear'd:

Bless'd in each other, but to no excess;  
Health, quiet, comfort, form'd their happiness;

Love all made up of torture and delight,  
Was but mere madness in this couple's sight:  
Susan could think, though not without a sigh,  
If she were gone, who should her place supply;  
And Robert, half in earnest, half in jest,  
Talk of her spouse when he should be at rest:  
Yet strange would either think it to be told,  
Their love was cooling or their hearts were cold.

Few were their acres,—but, with these content,

They were, each pay-day, ready with their rent;

And few their wishes—what their farm denied,

The neighbouring town at trifling cost supplied.

If at the draper's window Susan cast  
A longing look, as with her goods she pass'd,  
And, with the produce of the wheel and churn,  
Bought her a Sunday-robe on her return;  
True to her maxim, she would take no rest,  
Till care repaid that portion to the chest:

Or if, when loitering at the Whitsun-fair,  
Her Robert spent some idle shillings there;  
Up at the barn, before the break of day,  
He made his labour for th' indulgence pay:  
Thus both—that waste itself might work in  
vain—

Wrought double tides, and all was well again.

Yet, though so prudent, there were times  
of joy,

(The day they wed, the christening of the  
boy),

When to the wealthier farmers there was  
shown

Welcome unfeign'd, and plenty like their own;  
For Susan served the great, and had some  
pride

Among our topmost people to preside :

Yet in that plenty, in that welcome free,

There was the guiding nice frugality,

That, in the festal as the frugal day,

Has, in a different mode, a sovereign sway;

As tides the same attractive influence know,

In the last ebb and in their proudest flow ;

The wise frugality, that does not give

A life to saving, but that saves to live ;

Sparing, not pinching, mindful though not  
mean,

O'er all presiding, yet in nothing seen.

Recorded next a babe of love I trace !

Of many loves, the mother's fresh disgrace.—

'Again, thou harlot! could not all thy pain,  
All my reproof, thy wanton thoughts re-  
strain?'

'Alas! your reverence, wanton thoughts,  
I grant,

Were once my motive, now the thoughts of  
want ;

Women, like me, as ducks in a decoy,  
Swim down a stream, and seem to swim in  
joy ;

Your sex pursue us, and our own disdain ;

Return is dreadful, and escape is vain.

Would men forsake us, and would women  
strive

To help the fall'n, their virtue might revive.'

For rite of churching soon she made her  
way,

Indread of scandal, should she miss the day:—  
Two matrons came! with them she humbly  
knelt,

Their action copied and their comforts felt,  
From that great pain and peril to be free,  
Though still in peril of that pain to be ;

Alas! what numbers, like this amorous dame  
Are quick to censure, but are dead to shame!

Twin-infants then appear ; a girl, a boy,  
Th' o'erflowing cup of Gerard Ablett's joy :  
One had I named in every year that pass'd  
Since Gerard wed! and twins behold at last!  
Well pleased, the bridegroom smiled to hear—

'A vine

Fruitful and spreading round the walls be  
thine,

And branch-like be thine offspring!'

Gerard then

Look'd joyful love, and softly said, 'Amen.'

Now of that vine he'd have no more increase,

Those playful branches now disturb his peace:

Them he beholds around his table spread,

But finds, the more the branch, the less the  
bread ;

And while they run his humble walls about,

They keep the sunshine of good-humour out.

Cease, man, to grieve! thy master's lot  
survey,

Whom wife and children, thou and thine  
obey ;

A farmer proud, beyond a farmer's pride,

Of all around the envy or the guide ;

Who trots to market on a steed so fine,

That when I meet him, I'm ashamed of mine;

Whose board is high up-heap'd with generous  
fare,

Which five stout sons and three tall daughters  
share :

Cease, man, to grieve, and listen to his care.

A few years fled, and all thy boys shall be

Lords of a cot, and labourers like thee :

Thy girls unportion'd neighb'ring youths  
shall lead

Brides from my church, and thenceforth thou  
art freed :

But then thy master shall of cares complain,

Care after care, a long connected train ;

His sons for farms shall ask a large supply,

For farmers' sons each gentle miss shall sigh;

Thy mistress, reasoning well of life's decay,

Shall ask a chaise, and hardly brook delay;

The smart young cornet who, with so much  
grace,

Rode in the ranks and betted at the race,

While the vex'd parent rails at deed so rash,

Shall d—n his luck, and stretch his hand for  
cash.

Sad troubles, Gerard! now pertain to thee,

When thy rich master seems from trouble free;

But 'tis one fate at different times assign'd,  
And thou shalt lose the cares that he must find.

' Ah ! ' quoth our village Grocer, rich and old,  
' Would I might one such cause for care behold ! '

To whom his Friend, ' Mine greater bliss would be,  
Would Heav'n take those my spouse assigns to me. '

Aged were both, that Dawkins, Ditchem this,  
Who much of marriage thought, and much amiss ;

Both would delay, the one, till—riches gain'd,  
The son he wish'd might be to honour train'd ;  
His Friend—lest fierce intruding heirs should come,

To waste his hoard and vex his quiet home.

Dawkins, a dealer once, on burthen'd back  
Bore his whole substance in a pedler's pack ;  
To dames discreet, the duties yet unpaid,  
His stores of lace and hyson he convey'd :  
When thus enrich'd, he chose at home to stop,  
And fleece his neighbours in a new-built shop ;  
Then woo'd a spinster blithe, and hoped, when wed,

For love's fair favours and a fruitful bed.

Not so his Friend ;—on widow fair and staid

He fix'd his eye, but he was much afraid ;  
Yet woo'd ; while she his hair of silver hue  
Demurely noticed, and her eye withdrew :  
Doubtful he paused—' Ah ! were I sure, ' he cried,

' No craving children would my gains divide ;  
Fair as she is, I would my widow take,  
And live more largely for my partner's sake. '

With such their views some thoughtful years they pass'd,

And hoping, dreading, they were bound at last.

And what their fate ? Observe them as they go,

Comparing fear with fear and wo with wo.  
' Humphrey ! ' said Dawkins, ' envy in my breast

Sickens to see thee in thy children bless'd ;  
They are thy joys, while I go grieving home  
To a sad spouse, and our eternal gloom :  
We look despondency ; no infant near,  
To bless the eye or win the parent's ear ;

Our sudden heats and quarrels to allay,  
And soothe the petty sufferings of the day :  
Alike our want, yet both the want reprove ;  
Where are, I cry, these pledges of our love ?  
When she, like Jacob's wife, makes fierce reply,  
Yet fond—Oh ! give me children, or I die :  
And I return—still childless doom'd to live,  
Like the vex'd patriarch—Are they mine to give ?

Ah ! much I envy thee thy boys, who ride  
On poplar branch, and canter at thy side ;  
And girls, whose cheeks thy chin's fierce fondness know,

And with fresh beauty at the contact glow. '  
' Oh ! simple friend, ' said Ditchem, ' would'st thou gain

A father's pleasure by a husband's pain ?  
Alas ! what pleasure—when some vig'rous boy

Should swell thy pride, some rosy girl thy joy ;

Is it to doubt who grafted this sweet flower,  
Or whence arose that spirit and that power ?

Four years I've wed ; not one has pass'd in vain :

Behold the fifth ! behold, a babe again !  
My wife's gay friends th' unwelcome imp admire,

And fill the room with gratulation dire :  
While I in silence sate, revolving all  
That influence ancient men, or that befall ;  
A gay pert guest—Heav'n knows his business—came ;

A glorious boy, he cried, and what the name ?  
Angry I growl'd,—My spirit cease to tease,  
Name it yourselves,—Cain, Judas, if you please ;

His father's give him,—should you that explore,

The devil's or yours :—I said, and sought the door.

My tender partner not a word or sigh  
Gives to my wrath, nor to my speech reply ;  
But takes her comforts, triumphs in my pain,  
And looks undaunted for a birth agam. '

Heirs thus denied afflict the pining heart,  
And thus afforded, jealous pangs impart ;  
Let, therefore, none avoid, and none demand  
These arrows number'd for the giant's hand.

Then with their infants three, the parents came,  
And each assign'd—'twas all they had—a name ;

Names of no mark or price; of them not one  
Shall court our view on the sepulchral stone,  
Or stop the clerk, th' engraven scrolls to spell,  
Or keep the sexton from the sermon bell.

An orphan-girl succeeds: ere she was born  
Her father died, her mother on that morn:  
The pious mistress of the school sustains  
Her parents' part, nor their affection feigns,  
But pitying feels: with due respect and joy,  
I trace the matron at her loved employ;  
What time the striplings, wearied e'en with  
play,

Part at the closing of the summer's day,  
And each by different path returns the well-  
known way—

Then I behold her at her cottage-door,  
Frugal of light;—her Bible laid before,  
When on her double duty she proceeds,  
Of time as frugal—knitting as she reads:  
Her idle neighbours, who approach to tell  
Some trifling tale, her serious looks compel  
To hear reluctant,—while the lads who pass,  
In pure respect, walk silent on the grass:  
Then sinks the day, but not to rest she goes,  
Till solemn prayers the daily duties close.

But I digress, and lo! an infant train  
Appear, and call me to my task again.

'Why Lonicera wilt thou name thy child?'  
I ask'd the Gardener's wife, in accents mild:  
'We have a right,' replied the sturdy  
dame,—

And Lonicera was the infant's name.  
If next a son shall yield our Gardener joy,  
Then Hyacinthus shall be that fair boy;  
And if a girl, they will at length agree,  
That Belladonna that fair maid shall be.

High-sounding words our worthy Gardener  
gets,

And at his club to wondering swains repeats;  
He then of Rhus and Rododendron speaks,  
And Allium calls his onions and his leeks;  
Nor weeds are now, for whence arose the  
weed,

Scarce plants, fair herbs, and curious flowers  
proceed;

Where Cuckoo-pints and Dandelions sprung,  
(Gross names had they our plainer sires  
among,)

There Arums, there Leontodons we view,  
And Artemisia grows, where Wormwood grew.

But though no weed exists his garden round,  
From Rumex strong our Gardener frees his  
ground,

Takes soft Senicio from the yielding land,  
And grasps the arm'd Urtica in his hand.

Not Darwin's self had more delight to sing  
Of floral courtship, in th' awaken'd Spring,  
Than Peter Pratt, who simpering loves to tell  
How rise the Stamens, as the Pistils swell;  
How bend and curl the moist-top to the spouse,  
And give and take the vegetable vows;  
How those esteem'd of old but tips and  
chives,

Are tender husbands and obedient wives;  
Who live and love within the sacred bower,—  
That bridal bed, the vulgar term a flower.

Hear Peter proudly, to some humble friend,  
A wondrous secret, in his science, lend:—  
'Would you advance the nuptial hour, and  
bring

The fruit of Autumn with the flowers of  
Spring;

View that light frame where Cucumis lies  
spread,

And trace the husbands in their golden bed,  
Three powder'd Anthers;—then no more  
delay,

But to the Stigma's tip their dust convey;  
Then by thyself, from prying glance secure,  
Twirl the full tip and make your purpose sure;  
A long-abiding race the deed shall pay,  
Nor one unblest'd abortion pine away.'

T'admire their friend's discourse ours wains  
agree,

And call it science and philosophy.

'Tis good, 'tis pleasant, through th'  
advancing year,

To see unnumber'd growing forms appear;  
What leafy-life from Earth's broad bosom  
rise!

What insect-myriads seek the summer skies!  
What scaly tribes in every streamlet move!  
What plummy people sing in every grove!  
All with the year awaked to life, delight, and  
love.

Then names are good; for how, without their  
aid,

Is knowledge, gain'd by man, to man con-  
vey'd?

But from that source shall all our pleasures  
flow?

Shall all our knowledge be those names to  
know?

Then he, with memory bless'd, shall bear away  
The palm from Grew, and Middleton, and  
Ray:



No ! let us rather seek, in grove and field,  
What food for wonder, what for use they  
yield ;

Some just remark from Nature's people bring,  
And some new source of homage for her King.

Pride lives with all ; strange names our  
rustics give

To helpless infants, that their own may live ;  
Pleased to be known, they'll some attention  
claim,

And find some by-way to the house of fame.

The straightest furrow lifts the ploughman's  
art,

The hat he gain'd has warmth for head and  
heart ;

The bowl that beats the greater number down  
Of tottering nine-pins, gives to fame the  
clown ;

Or, foil'd in these, he opes his ample jaws,  
And lets a frog leap down, to gain applause ;

Or grins for hours, or tipples for a week,  
Or challenges a well-pinch'd pig to squeak :

Some idle deed, some child's preposterous  
name,

Shall make him known, and give his folly  
fame.

To name an infant meet our village-sires,  
Assembled all, as such event requires ;

Frequent and full, the rural sages sate,  
And speakers many urged the long debate,—

Some harden'd knaves, who roved the country  
round,

Had left a babe within the parish-bound.—  
First, of the fact they question'd—' Was it  
true ? '

The child was brought—' What then remain'd  
to do ?

Was't dead or living ? ' This was fairly  
proved,—

'Twas pinch'd, it roar'd, and every doubt  
removed.

Then by what name th' unwelcome guest to  
call

Was long a question, and it posed them all ;  
For he who lent it to a babe unknown,

Censorious men might take it for his own :  
They look'd about, they gravely spoke to all

And not one Richard answer'd to the call.  
Next they inquired the day, when, passing by,

Th' unlucky peasant heard the stranger's cry ;  
This known,—how food and raiment they  
might give,

Was next debated—for the rogue would live ;

At last, with all their words and work content,  
Back to their homes the prudent vestry went,  
And Richard Monday to the workhouse sent.  
There was he pinch'd and pitied, thump'd and  
fed,

And duly took his beatings and his bread ;  
Patient in all control, in all abuse,  
He found contempt and kicking have their  
use :

Sad, silent, supple ; bending to the blow,  
A slave of slaves, the lowest of the low ;

His pliant soul gave way to all things base,  
He knew no shame, he dreaded no disgrace.

It seem'd, so well his passions he suppress'd,  
No feeling stirr'd his ever-torpid breast ;

Him might the meanest pauper bruise and  
cheat,

He was a footstool for the beggar's feet ;  
His were the legs that ran at all commands ;

They used on all occasion Richard's hands :  
His very soul was not his own ; he stole

As others order'd, and without a dole ;  
In all disputes, on either part he lied,

And freely pledged his oath on either side ;  
In all rebellions Richard join'd the rest,

In all detections Richard first confess'd :  
Yet, though disgraced, he watch'd his time so  
well,

He rose in favour, when in fame he fell ;  
Base was his usage, vile his whole employ,

And all despised and fed the pliant boy.  
At length, ' 'tis time he should abroad be sent,'

Was whisper'd near him,—and abroad he  
went ;

One morn they call'd him, Richard answer'd  
not ;

They deem'd him hanging, and in time  
forgot,—

Yet miss'd him long, as each, throughout the  
clan,

Found he ' had better spared a better man.'  
Now Richard's talents for the world were  
fit,

He'd no small cunning, and had some small  
wit ;

Had that calm look which seem'd to all assent,  
And that complacent speech which nothing  
meant :

He'd but one care, and that he strove to hide,  
How best for Richard Monday to provide.

Steel, through opposing plates, the magnet  
draws,

And stately atoms culls from dust and straws ;

And thus our hero, to his interest true,  
Gold through all bars and from each trifle  
drew ;

But still more surely round the world to go,  
This fortune's child had neither friend nor  
foe.

Long lost to us, at last our man we trace,—  
Sir Richard Monday died at Monday-place :  
His lady's worth, his daughter's we peruse,  
And find his grandsons all as rich as Jews :  
He gave reforming charities a sum,  
And bought the blessings of the blind and  
dumb ;

Bequeathed to missions money from the  
stocks,

And Bibles issued from his private box ;  
But to his native place severely just,  
He left a pittance bound in rigid trust ;—  
Two paltry pounds, on every quarter's-day,  
(At church produced) for forty loaves should  
pay ;

A stinted gift, that to the parish shows  
He kept in mind their bounty and their blows !

To farmers three, the year has given a son,  
Finch on the Moor, and French, and Middle-  
ton.

Twice in this year a female Giles I see,  
A Spalding once, and once a Barnaby :—  
A humble man is he, and, when they meet,  
Our farmers find him on a distant seat ;  
There for their wit he serves a constant  
theme,—

' They praise his dairy, they extol his team,  
They ask the price of each unrivall'd steed,  
And whence his sheep, that admirable breed ?  
His thriving arts they beg he would explain,  
And where he puts the money he must gain.  
They have their daughters, but they fear  
their friend

Would think his sons too much would con-  
descend ;—

They have their sons who would their fortunes  
try,

But fear his daughters will their suit deny.'  
So runs the joke, while James, with sigh pro-  
found,

And face of care, looks moveless on the  
ground ;

His cares, his sighs, provoke the insult more,  
And point the jest—for Barnaby is poor.

Last in my list, five untaught lads appear ;  
Their father dead, compassion sent them  
here,—

For still that rustic infidel denied  
To have their names with solemn rite applied:  
His, a lone house, by Deadman's Dyke-way  
stood ;

And his, a nightly haunt, in Lonely-wood :  
Each village inn has heard the ruffian boast,  
That he believed ' in neither God nor ghost ;  
That, when the sod upon the sinner press'd,  
He, like the saint, had everlasting rest ;  
That never priest believed his doctrines true,  
But would, for profit, own himself a Jew,  
Or worship wood and stone, as honest heathen  
do ;

That fools alone on future worlds rely,  
And all who die for faith, deserve to die.'

These maxims,—part th' attorney's clerk  
profess'd,

His own transcendent genius found the rest.  
Our pious matrons heard, and, much amazed,  
Gazed on the man, and trembled as they  
gazed ;

And now his face explored, and now his feet,  
Man's dreaded foe, in this bad man, to meet:  
But him our drunkards as their champion  
raised,

Their bishop call'd, and as their hero praised ;  
Though most, when sober, and the rest, when  
sick,

Had little question whence his bishopric.

But he, triumphant spirit! all things  
dared,

He poach'd the wood, and on the warren  
snared ;

'Twas his, at cards, each novice to trepan,  
And call the wants of rogues the rights of  
man ;

Wild as the winds, he let his offspring rove,  
And deem'd the marriage-bond the bane of  
love.

What age and sickness, for a man so bold,  
Had done, we know not ;—none beheld him  
old :

By night, as business urged, he sought the  
wood,—

The ditch was deep,—the rain had caused a  
flood,—

The foot-bridge fail'd,—he plunged beneath  
the deep,

And slept, if truth were his, th' eternal sleep.

These have we named ; on life's rough sea  
they sail,

With many a prosperous, many an adverse  
gale !

Where passion soon, like powerful winds, will  
 rage,  
 And prudence, wearied, with their strength  
 engage :  
 Then each, in aid, shall some companion ask,  
 For help or comfort in the tedious task ;  
 And what that help—what joys from union  
 flow,

What good or ill, we next prepare to  
 show ;  
 And row, meantime, your weary bark ashore,  
 As Spenser his—but not with Spenser's  
 oar.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Allusions of this kind are to be found in the  
*Fairy Queen*. See the end of the first book, and  
 other places.

## PART II. MARRIAGES

Nubere si quâ vobis, quamvis properabit  
 ambo,  
 Differ; habent parvae commoda magna  
 morae.

—OVID, *Fast.* lib. iii. vv. 393, 4.

Previous Consideration necessary: yet not  
 too long Delay—Imprudent Marriage of old  
 Kirk and his Servant—Comparison between  
 an ancient and youthful Partner to a young  
 Man—Prudence of Donald the Gardener—  
 Parish Wedding: the compelled Bride-  
 groom: Day of Marriage, how spent—Rela-  
 tion of the Accomplishments of Phœbe  
 Dawson, a rustic Beauty: her Lover: his  
 Courtship: their Marriage—Misery of Pre-  
 cipitation—The wealthy Couple: Reluc-  
 tance in the Husband; why?—Unusually  
 fair Signatures in the Register: the common  
 Kind—Seduction of Lucy Collins by Foot-  
 man Daniel: her rustic Lover: her Return  
 to him—An ancient Couple: Comparisons  
 on the Occasion—More pleasant View of  
 Village Matrimony: Farmers celebrating  
 the Day of Marriage: their Wives—Reuben  
 and Rachel, a happy Pair: an Example  
 of prudent Delay—Reflections on their  
 State who were not so prudent, and its  
 Improvement towards the Termination of  
 Life: an old Man so circumstanced—  
 Attempt to seduce a Village Beauty: Per-  
 suasion and Reply: the Event.

DISPOSED to wed, e'en while you hasten,  
 stay ;

There's great advantage in a small delay:—  
 Thus Ovid sang, and much the wise approve  
 This prudent maxim of the priest of Love :  
 If poor, delay for future want prepares,  
 And eases humble life of half its cares ;  
 If rich, delay shall brace the thoughtful mind,  
 To endure the ills that e'en the happiest find :  
 Delay shall knowledge yield on either part,  
 And show the value of the vanquish'd heart ;

The humours, passions, merits, failings prove,  
 And gently raise the veil that's worn by  
 Love ;

Love, that impatient guide !—too proud to  
 think

Of vulgar wants, of clothing, meat and drink,  
 Urges our amorous swains their joys to seize,  
 And then, at rags and hunger frighten'd,  
 flees :—

Yet not too long in cold debate remain ;  
 Till age refrain not—but if old, refrain.

By no such rule would Gaffer Kirk be tried ;  
 First in the year he led a blooming bride,  
 And stood a wither'd elder at her side.  
 Oh ! Nathan ! Nathan ! at thy years tre-  
 pann'd,

To take a wanton harlot by the hand !  
 Thou, who wert used so tartly to express  
 Thy sense of matrimonial happiness,  
 Till every youth, whose bans at church were  
 read,

Strove not to meet, or meeting, hung his head ;  
 And every lass forbore at thee to look,  
 A sly old fish, too cunning for the hook ;—  
 And now at sixty, that pert dame to see,  
 Of all thy savings mistress, and of thee ;  
 Now will the lads, rememb'ring insults past,  
 Cry, ' What, the wise-one in the trap at last !'  
 Fie ! Nathan ! fie ! to let an artful jade  
 The close recesses of thine heart invade ;  
 What grievous pangs ! what suffering she'll  
 impart,

And fill with anguish that rebellious heart ;  
 For thou wilt strive incessantly, in vain,  
 By threatening speech, thy freedom to re-  
 gain :

But she for conquest married, nor will prove  
 A dupe to thee, thine anger, or thy love ;  
 Clamorous her tongue will be ;—of either sex,  
 She'll gather friends around thee and perplex

Thy doubtful soul;—thy money she will waste,

In the vain ramblings of a vulgar taste ;

And will be happy to exert her power,

In every eye, in thine, at every hour.

Then wilt thou bluster—'No ! I will not rest,

And see consumed each shilling of my chest :'

Thou wilt be valiant,—'When thy cousins call,

I will abuse and shut my door on all :'

Thou wilt be cruel !—'What the law allows,

That be thy portion, my ungrateful spouse !

Nor other shillings shalt thou then receive,

And when I die'——'What ! may I this believe ?

Are these true tender tears ? and does my Kitty grieve ?

Ah ! crafty vixen, thine old man has fears ;

But weep no more ! I'm melted by thy tears ;

Spare but my money ; thou shalt rule me still,

And see thy cousins—there ! I burn the will.'—

Thus with example sad, our year began,  
A wanton vixen and a weary man ;

'But had this tale in other guise been told,'

Young let the lover be, the lady old,

And that disparity of years shall prove

No bane of peace, although some bar to love :

'Tis not the worst, our nuptial ties among,

That joins the ancient bride and bridegroom young ;—

Young wives, like changing winds, their power display,

By shifting points and varying day by day ;

Now zephyrs mild, now whirlwinds in their force,

They sometimes speed, but often thwart our course ;

And much experienced should that pilot be,

Who sails with them on life's tempestuous sea.

But like a trade-wind is the ancient dame,

Mild to your wish, and every day the same ;

Steady as time, no sudden squalls you fear,

But set full sail and with assurance steer ;

Till every danger in your way be pass'd,

And then she gently, mildly breathes her last ;

Rich you arrive, in port awhile remain,

And for a second venture sail again.

For this, blithe Donald southward made his way,

And left the lasses on the banks of Tay ;

Him to a neighbouring garden fortune sent,  
Whom we beheld, aspiringly content :

Patient and mild, he sought the dame to please,

Who ruled the kitchen and who bore the keys.

Fair Lucy first, the laundry's grace and pride,

With smiles and gracious looks, her fortune tried ;

But all in vain she praised his 'pawky eyne.'

Where never fondness was for Lucy seen :

Him the mild Susan, boast of dairies, loved,

And found him civil, cautious, and unmoved :

From many a fragrant simple, Catharine's skill

Drew oil and essence from the boiling still ;

But not her warmth, nor all her winning ways,

From his cool phlegm could Donald's spirit raise :

Of beauty heedless, with the merry mute,

To Mistress Dobson he preferr'd his suit ;

There proved his service, there address'd his vows,

And saw her mistress,—friend,—protectress,—spouse ;

A butler now, he thanks his powerful bride,

And, like her keys, keeps constant at herside.

Next at our altar stood a luckless pair,

Brought by strong passions and a warrant there ;

By long rent cloak, hung loosely, strove the bride,

From ev'ry eye, what all perceived, to hide.

While the boy-bridegroom, shuffling in his pace,

Now hid awhile and then exposed his face ;

As shame alternately with anger strove,

The brain confused with muddy ale to move :

In haste and stammering he perform'd his part,

And look'd the rage that rankled in his heart ;

(So will each lover only curse his fate,

Too soon made happy and made wise too late :)

I saw his features take a savage gloom,

And deeply threaten for the days to come.

Low spake the lass, and lisp'd and minced the while,

Look'd on the lad, and faintly tried to smile ;

With soften'd speech and humbled tone she strove

To stir the embers of departed love :

While he, a tyrant, frowning walk'd before,

Felt the poor purse and sought the public door,

She sadly following in submission went,  
And saw the final shilling foully spent;  
Then to her father's hut the pair withdrew,  
And bade to love and comfort long adieu!  
Ah! fly temptation, youth, refrain! refrain!  
I preach for ever; but I preach in vain!

Two summers since, I saw, at Lammas Fair,  
The sweetest flower that ever blossom'd there,  
When Phoebe Dawson gaily cross'd the Green,  
In haste to see and happy to be seen:  
Her air, her manners, all who saw, admired;  
Courteous though coy, and gentle though retired;

The joy of youth and health her eyes display'd,

And ease of heart her every look convey'd;  
A native skill her simple robes express'd,  
As with untutor'd elegance she dress'd:  
The lads around admired so fair a sight,  
And Phoebe felt, and felt she gave, delight.  
Admirers soon of every age she gain'd,  
Her beauty won them and her worth retain'd;  
Envy itself could no contempt display,  
They wish'd her well, whom yet they wish'd away.

Correct in thought, she judged a servant's place

Preserved a rustic beauty from disgrace;  
But yet on Sunday-even, in freedom's hour,  
With secret joy she felt that beauty's power,  
When some proud bliss upon the heart would steal,

That, poor or rich, a beauty still must feel.—  
At length, the youth, ordain'd to move her breast,

Before the swains with bolder spirit press'd;  
With looks less timid made his passion known,  
And pleased by manners most unlike her own;  
Loud though in love, and confident though young;

Fierce in his air, and voluble of tongue;  
By trade a tailor, though, in scorn of trade,  
He served the 'Squire, and brush'd the coat he made:

Yet now, would Phoebe her consent afford,  
Her slave alone, again he'd mount the board;  
With her should years of growing love be spent,

And growing wealth:—she sigh'd and look'd consent.

Now, through the lane, up hill, and 'cross the green,

(Seen by but few, and blushing to be seen—

Dejected, thoughtful, anxious, and afraid,)  
Led by the lover, walk'd the silent maid:  
Slow through the meadow roved they, many a mile

Toy'd by each bank and trifled at each stile;  
Where, as he painted every blissful view,  
And highly colour'd what he strongly drew,  
The pensive damsel, prone to tender fears,  
Dimm'd the false prospect with prophetic tears.—

Thus pass'd th' allotted hours, till lingering late,

The lover loiter'd at the master's gate;  
There he pronounced adieu! and yet would stay,

Till chidden—soothed—entreated—forced away;

He would of coldness, though indulged, complain,

And oft retire and oft return again;  
When, if his teasing vex'd her gentle mind,  
The grief assumed, compell'd her to be kind!  
For he would proof of plighted kindness crave,  
That she resented first and then forgave,  
And to his grief and penance yielded more  
Than his presumption had required before.—  
Ah! fly temptation, youth, refrain! refrain!

Each yielding maid and each presuming swain!

Lo! now with red rent cloak and bonnet black,

And torn green gown loose hanging at her back,

One who an infant in her arms sustains,  
And seems in patience striving with her pains;  
Pinch'd are her looks, as one who pines for bread,

Whose cares are growing and whose hopes are fled;

Pale her parch'd lips, her heavy eyes sunk low,

And tears unnoticed from their channels flow;  
Serene her manner, till some sudden pain  
Frets the meek soul, and then she's calm again;

Her broken pitcher to the pool she takes,  
And every step with cautious terror makes;  
For not alone that infant in her arms,  
But nearer cause, her anxious soul alarms.  
With water burthen'd, then she picks her way,

Slowly and cautious, in the clinging clay;

Till, in mid-green, she trusts a place unsound,  
And deeply plunges in th' adhesive ground;  
Thence, but with pain, her slender foot she  
takes,

While hope the mind as strength the frame  
forsakes :

For when so full the cup of sorrow grows,  
Add but a drop, it instantly o'erflows.  
And now her path, but not her peace, she  
gains,

Safe from her task, but shivering with her  
pains ;

Her home she reaches, open leaves the door,  
And placing first her infant on the floor,  
She bares her bosom to the wind, and sits,  
And sobbing struggles with the rising fits :  
In vain, they come, she feels th' inflating  
grief,

That shuts the swelling bosom from relief ;  
That speaks in feeble cries a soul distress'd,  
Or the sad laugh that cannot be repress'd.  
The neighbour-matron leaves her wheel and  
flies

With all the aid her poverty supplies ;  
Unfee'd, the calls of Nature she obeys,  
Not led by profit, nor allured by praise ;  
And waiting long, till these contentions cease,  
She speaks of comfort, and departs in peace.

Friend of distress! the mourner feels thy aid,  
She cannot pay thee, but thou wilt be paid.

But who this child of weakness, want, and  
care ?

'Tis Phoebe Dawson, pride of Lammas Fair;  
Who took her lover for his sparkling eyes,  
Expressions warm, and love-inspiring lies :  
Compassion first assail'd her gentle heart,  
For all his suffering, all his bosom's smart :  
' And then his prayers! they would a savage  
move,

And win the coldest of the sex to love : —  
But ah ! too soon his looks success declared,  
Too late her loss the marriage-rite repaired ;  
The faithless flatterer then his vows forgot,  
A captious tyrant or a noisy sot ;  
If present, railing, till he saw her pain'd ;  
If absent, spending what their labours gain'd ;  
Till that fair form in want and sickness pined,  
And hope and comfort fled that gentle mind.  
Then fly temptation, youth; resist, refrain!  
Nor let me preach for ever and in vain !

Next came a well-dress'd pair, who left  
their coach,

And made, in long procession, slow approach :

For this gay bride had many a female friend,  
And youths were there, this favour'd youth  
t' attend :

Silent, nor wanting due respect, the crowd  
Stood humbly round, and gratulation bow'd ;  
But not that silent crowd, in wonder fix'd,  
Not numerous friends, who praise and envy  
mix'd,

Nor nymphs attending near to swell the pride  
Of one more fair, the ever-smiling bride ;  
Nor that gay bride, adorn'd with every grace,  
Nor love nor joy triumphant in her face,  
Could from the youth's, sad signs of sorrow  
chase :

Why didst thou grieve? wealth, pleasure,  
freedom thine ;

Vex'd it thy soul, that freedom to resign ?  
Spake Scandal truth? 'Thou didst not then  
intend

So soon to bring thy wooing to an end ?'

Or, was it, as our prating rustics say,  
To end as soon, but in a different way ?

'Tis told thy Phillis is a skilful dame,  
Who play'd uninjured with the dangerous  
flame :

That, while, like Lovelace, thou thy coat dis-  
play'd,

And hid the snare for her affection laid,  
Thee, with her net, she found the means to  
catch,

And at the amorous see-saw, won the match :<sup>1</sup>  
Yet others tell, the Captain fix'd thy doubt,  
He'd call thee brother, or he'd call thee out : —  
But rest the motive—all retreat too late,  
Joy like thy bride's should on thy brow have  
sate ;

The deed had then appear'd thine own intent,  
A glorious day, by gracious fortune sent,  
In each revolving year to be in triumph spent.  
Then in few weeks that cloudy brow had been  
Without a wonder or a whisper seen ;  
And none had been so weak as to inquire,  
'Why pouts my Lady?' or 'why frowns the  
Squire?'

How fair these names, how much unlike  
they look

To all the blurr'd subscriptions in my book :  
The bridegroom's letters stand in row above,  
Tapering yet stout, like pine-trees in his grove ;  
While free and fine the bride's appear below,  
As light and slender as her jasmines grow.

<sup>1</sup> *Clarissa*, vol. vii, Lovelace's Letter.

Mark now in what confusion, stoop or stand,  
The crooked scrawls of many a clownish hand;  
Now out, now in, they droop, they fall, they  
rise,

Like raw recruits drawn forth for exercise;  
Ere yet reform'd and modell'd by the drill,  
The free-born legs stand striding as they will.

Much have I tried to guide the fist along,  
But still the blunderers placed their blottings  
wrong :

Behold these marks uncouth ! how strange  
that men,

Who guide the plough, should fail to guide the  
pen :

For half a mile, the furrows even lie ;  
For half an inch the letters stand awry ;—  
Our peasants, strong and sturdy in the field,  
Cannot these arms of idle students wield :  
Like them, in feudal days, their valiant lords  
Resign'd the pen and grasp'd their conqu'ring  
swords ;

They to robed clerks and poor dependent men  
Left the light duties of the peaceful pen ;  
Nor to their ladies wrote, but sought to prove,  
By deeds of death, their hearts were fill'd with  
love.

But yet, small arts have charms for female  
eyes ;

Our rustic nymphs the beau and scholar prize ;  
Unletter'd swains and ploughmen coarse they  
slight,

For those who dress, and amorous scrolls in-  
dite.

For Lucy Collins happier days had been,  
Had Footman Daniel scorn'd his native green ;  
Or when he came an idle coxcomb down,  
Had he his love reserved for lass in town ;  
To Stephen Hill she then had pledged her  
truth,—

A sturdy, sober, kind, unpolish'd youth ;  
But from that day, that fatal day she spied  
The pride of Daniel, Daniel was her pride.  
In all concerns was Stephen just and true ;  
But coarse his doublet was and patch'd in  
view,

And felt his stockings were, and blacker than  
his shoe ;

While Daniel's linen all was fine and fair,—  
His master wore it, and he deign'd to wear :  
(To wear his livery, some respect might prove ;  
To wear his linen, must be sign of love :)  
Blue was his coat, unsoil'd by spot or stain ;  
His hose were silk, his shoes of Spanish-grain ;

A silver knot his breadth of shoulder bore ;  
A diamond buckle blazed his breast before—  
Diamond he swore it was ! and show'd it as he  
swore ;

Rings on his fingers shone ; his milk-white  
hand

Could pick-tooth case and box for snuff  
command :

And thus, with clouded cane, a fop complete,  
He stalk'd, the jest and glory of the street,  
Join'd with these powers, he could so sweetly  
sing,

Talk with such toss, and saunter with such  
swing ;

Laugh with such glee, and trifle with such art,  
That Lucy's promise fail'd to shield her heart.

Stephen, meantime, to ease his amorous  
cares,

Fix'd his full mind upon his farm's affairs ;  
Two pigs, a cow, and wethers half a score,  
Increased his stock, and still he look'd for  
more.

He, for his acres few, so duly paid,  
That yet more acres to his lot were laid ;  
Till our chaste nymphs no longer felt disdain,  
And prudent matrons praised the frugal swain ;  
Who thriving well, through many a fruitful  
year,

Now clothed himself anew, and acted overseer.  
Just then poor Lucy, from her friend in  
town,

Fled in pure fear, and came a beggar down ;  
Trembling, at Stephen's door she knock'd  
for bread,—

Was chidden first, next pitied, and then fed ;  
Then sat at Stephen's board, then shared in  
Stephen's bed :

All hope of marriage lost in her disgrace,  
He mourns a flame revived, and she a love of  
lace.

Now to be wed a well-match'd couple came ;  
Twice had old Lodge been tied, and twice the  
dame ;

Tottering they came and toying, (odious  
scene !)

And fond and simple, as they'd always been.  
Children from wedlock we by laws restrain ;  
Why not prevent them, when they're such  
again ?

Why not forbid the dotting souls, to prove  
Th' indecent fondling of preposterous love ?  
In spite of prudence, uncontroll'd by shame,  
The amorous senior woos the toothless dame,

Relating idly, at the closing eve,  
The youthful follies he disdains to leave;  
Till youthful follies wake a transient fire,  
When arm in arm they totter and retire.

So a fond pair of solemn birds, all day,  
Blink in their seat and doze the hours away;  
Then by the moon awaken'd, forth they move,  
And fright the songsters with their cheerless love.

So two sear trees, dry, stunted, and unsound,  
Each other catch, when dropping to the ground;  
Entwine their wither'd arms 'gainst wind and weather,  
And shake their leafless heads and drop together.

So two cold limbs, touch'd by Galvani's wire,  
Move with new life, and feel awaken'd fire;  
Quivering awhile, their flaccid forms remain,  
Then turn to cold torpidity again.

'But ever frowns your Hymen? man and maid,  
Are all repenting, suffering, or betray'd?'  
Forbid it, Love! we have our couples here  
Who hail the day in each revolving year:  
These are with us, as in the world around;  
They are not frequent, but they may be found.

Our farmers too, what though they fail to prove,  
In Hymen's bonds, the tenderest slaves of love,  
(Nor, like those pairs whom sentiment unites,  
Feel they the fervour of the mind's delights;)  
Yet coarsely kind and comfortably gay,  
They heap the board and hail the happy day:  
And though the bride, now freed from school,  
admits,

Of pride implanted there, some transient fits;  
Yet soon she casts her girlish flights aside,  
And in substantial blessings rests her pride.  
No more she moves in measured steps, no more

Runs, with bewilder'd ear, her music o'er;  
No more recites her French the hinds among,  
But chides her maidens in her mother-tongue;  
Her tambour-frames she leaves and diet spare,  
Plain work and plenty with her house to share;

Till, all her varnish lost, in few short years,  
In all her worth, the farmer's wife appears.

Yet not the ancient kind; nor she who gave

Her soul to gain—a mistress and a slave:  
Who not to sleep allow'd the needful time;  
To whom repose was loss, and sport a crime;  
Who, in her meanest room (and all were mean),

A noisy drudge, from morn till night was seen;—

But she, the daughter, boasts a decent room,  
Adorn'd with carpet, form'd in Wilton's loom;

Fair prints along the paper'd wall are spread;  
There, Werter sees the sportive children fed,  
And Charlotte, here, bewails her lover dead.

'Tis here, assembled, while in space apart  
Their husbands, drinking, warm the opening heart,

Our neighbouring dames, on festal days, unite

With tongues more fluent and with hearts as light;

Theirs is that art, which English wives alone  
Profess—a boast and privilege their own;  
An art it is, where each at once attends  
To all, and claims attention from her friends,  
When they engage the tongue, the eye, the ear,

Reply when list'ning, and when speaking hear:

The ready converse knows no dull delays,  
'But double are the pains, and double be the praise.'

Yet not to those alone who bear command  
Heaven gives a heart to hail the marriage band;

Among their servants, we the pairs can show,  
Who much to love and more to prudence owe:  
Reuben and Rachel, though as fond as doves,  
Were yet discreet and cautious in their loves;

Nor would attend to Cupid's wild commands,  
Till cool reflection bade them join their hands:  
When both were poor, they thought it argued ill

Of hasty love to make them poorer still;  
Year after year, with savings long laid by,  
They bought the future dwelling's full supply;  
Her frugal fancy cull'd the smaller ware,  
The weightier purchase ask'd her Reuben's care;



Together then their last year's gain they  
threw,

And lo ! an auction'd bed, with curtains neat  
and new.

Thus both, as prudence counsell'd, wisely  
stay'd,

And cheerful then the calls of Love obey'd :  
What if, when Rachel gave her hand, 'twas  
one

Embrown'd by Winter's ice and Summer's  
sun ?

What if, in Reuben's hair, the female eye  
Usurping grey among the black could spy ?

What if, in both, life's bloomy flush was lost,  
And their full autumn felt the mellowing frost ?

Yet time, who blow'd the rose of youth away,  
Had left the vigorous stem without decay ;

Like those tall elms, in Farmer Frankford's  
ground,

They'll grow no more,—but all their growth is  
sound ;

By time confirm'd and rooted in the land,  
The storms they've stood, still promise they  
shall stand.

These are the happier pairs, their life has  
rest,

Their hopes are strong, their humble portion  
bless'd ;

While those more rash to hasty marriage led,  
Lament th' impatience which now stints their  
bread :

When such their union, years their cares in-  
crease,

Their love grows colder, and their pleasures  
cease ;

In health just fed, in sickness just relieved ;  
By hardships harass'd and by children  
grieved ;

In petty quarrels and in peevish strife, .  
The once fond couple waste the spring of life :

But when to age mature those children grown,  
Find hopes and homes and hardships of their  
own,

The harass'd couple feel their lingering woes  
Receding slowly, till they find repose.

Complaints and murmurs then are laid aside,  
(By reason these subdued, and those by  
pride ;)

And, taught by care, the patient man and wife  
Agree to share the bitter-sweet of life ;

(Life that has sorrow much and sorrow's cure,  
Where they who most enjoy shall much en-  
dure :)

Their rest, their labours, duties, sufferings,  
prayers, .

Compose the soul, and fit it for its cares ;  
Their graves before them and their griefs  
behind,

Have each a med'cine for the rustic mind ;  
Nor shall he care to whom his wealth shall go,  
Or who shall labour with his spade and hoe ;  
But as he lends the strength that yet remains,  
And some dead neighbour on his bier sustains,  
(One with whom oft he whirl'd the bounding  
flail,

Toss'd the broad coit, or took th' inspiring  
ale,)

' For me,' (he meditates), ' shall soon be done  
This friendly duty, when my race be run ;

'Twas first in trouble as in error pass'd,  
Dark clouds and stormy cares whole years

o'ercast,  
But calm my setting day, and sunshine smiles

at last :  
My vices punish'd and my follies spent,

Not loth to die, but yet to live content,  
I rest :—then casting on the grave his eye,

His friend compels a tear, and his own griefs  
a sigh.

Last on my list appears a match of love,  
And one of virtue ;—happy may it prove !—

Sir Edward Archer is an amorous knight,  
And maidens chaste and lovely shun his  
sight ;

His bailiff's daughter suited much his taste,  
For Fanny Price was lovely and was chaste ;

To her the Knight with gentle looks drew  
near,

And timid voice assumed, to banish fear.—  
' Hope of my life, dear sovereign of my

breast,  
Which, since I knew thee, knows not joy nor

rest ;  
Know, thou art all that my delighted eyes,

My fondest thoughts, my proudest wishes  
prize ;

And is that posom—(what on earth so fair !)  
To cradle some coarse peasant's sprawling

heir ?  
To be that pillow which some surly swain

May treat with scorn and agonize with pain ?  
Art thou, sweet maid, a ploughman's wants

to share,  
To dread his insult, to support his care ;

To hear his follies, his contempt to prove,  
And (oh ! the torment !) to endure his love ;

Till want and deep regret those charms destroy,  
 That time would spare if time were pass'd in joy?  
 With him, in varied pains, from morn till night,  
 Your hours shall pass; yourself a ruffian's right;  
 Your softest bed shall be the knotted wool;  
 Your purest drink the waters of the pool;  
 Your sweetest food will but your life sustain,  
 And your best pleasure be a rest from pain;  
 While, through each year, as health and strength abate,  
 You'll weep your woes and wonder at your fate;  
 And cry, "Behold," as life's last cares come on,  
 "My burthens growing when my strength is gone."  
 'Now turn with me, and all the young desire,  
 That taste can form, that fancy can require;  
 All that excites enjoyment, or procures  
 Wealth, health, respect, delight, and love, are yours:  
 Sparkling, in cups of gold, your wines shall flow,  
 Grace that fair hand, in that dear bosom glow;  
 Fruits of each clime, and flowers, through all the year,  
 Shall on your walls and in your walks appear;  
 Where all beholding, shall your praise repeat,  
 No fruit so tempting and no flower so sweet:  
 The softest carpets in your rooms shall lie,  
 Pictures of happiest loves shall meet your eye,  
 And tallest mirrors, reaching to the floor,  
 Shall show you all the object I adore;

Who, by the hands of wealth and fashion dress'd,  
 By slaves attended and by friends caress'd,  
 Shall move, a wonder, through the public ways,  
 And hear the whispers of adoring praise.  
 Your female friends, though gayest of the gay,  
 Shall see you happy, and shall, sighing, say,  
 While smother'd envy rises in the breast,—  
 "Oh! that we lived so beauteous and so bless'd!"  
 'Come then, my mistress, and my wife;  
 for she  
 Who trusts my honour is the wife for me;  
 Your slave, your husband, and your friend employ,  
 In search of pleasures we may both enjoy.  
 To this the damsel, meekly firm, replied:  
 'My mother loved, was married, toil'd, and died;  
 With joys, she'd griefs, had troubles in her course,  
 But not one grief was pointed by remorse;  
 My mind is fix'd, to Heaven I resign,  
 And be her love, her life, her comforts mine.'  
 Tyrants have wept; and those with hearts of steel,  
 Unused the anguish of the heart to heal,  
 Have yet the transient power of virtue known,  
 And felt th' imparted joy promote their own.  
 Our Knight relenting, now befriends a youth,  
 Who to the yielding maid had vow'd his truth;  
 And finds in that fair deed a sacred joy,  
 That will not perish, and that cannot cloy;—  
 A living joy, that shall its spirit keep,  
 When every beauty fades, and all the passions sleep.

## PART III. BURIALS

Qui vultus Acherontis atri,  
Qui Styga tristem, non tristis, videt,—

Par ille Regi, par Superis erit.  
SENECA, in *Agamem.* vv. 607-8 and 610.

True Christian Resignation not frequently to be seen—The Register a melancholy Record—A dying Man, who at length sends for a Priest: for what Purpose? answered—Old Collet of the Inn, an Instance of Dr. Young's slow-sudden Death: his Character and Conduct—The Manners and Management of the Widow Goe: her successful Attention to Business: her Decease unexpected—The Infant-Boy of Gerard Ablett dies: Reflections on his Death, and the Survivor his Sister Twin—The Funeral of the deceased Lady of the Manor described: her neglected Mansion: Undertaker and Train: the Character which her Monument will hereafter display—Burial of an ancient Maiden: some former Drawback on her Virgin-fame: Description of her House and Household: Her Manners, Apprehensions, Death—Isaac Ashford, a virtuous Peasant, dies: his manly Character: Reluctance to enter the Poor-House: and why—Misfortune and Derangement of Intellect in Robin Dingley: whence they proceeded: he is not restrained by Misery from a wandering Life: his various Returns to his Parish: his final Return—Wife of Farmer Frankford dies in Prime of Life: Affliction in Consequence of such Death: melancholy View of her House, &c. on her Family's Return from her Funeral: Address to Sorrow—Leah Cousins, a Midwife: her Character; and successful Practice: at length opposed by Doctor Glibb: Opposition in the Parish: Argument of the Doctor; of Leah: her Failure and Decease—Burial of Roger Cuff, a Sailor: his Enmity to his Family: how it originated: his Experiment and its Consequence—The Register terminates—A Bell heard: Inquiry for whom? The Sexton—Character of old Dibble, and the five Rectors whom he served—Reflections—Conclusion.

THERE was, 'tis said, and I believe, a time,  
When humble Christians died with views sublime;

When all were ready for their faith to bleed,  
But few to write or wrangle for their creed;  
When lively Faith upheld the sinking heart,  
And friends, assured to meet, prepared to part;

When Love felt hope, when Sorrow grew serene,  
And all was comfort in the death-bed scene.  
Alas! when now the gloomy king they wait,

'Tis weakness yielding to resistless fate;  
Like wretched men upon the ocean cast,  
They labour hard and struggle to the last;  
'Hope against hope,' and wildly gaze around,  
In search of help that never shall be found:  
Nor, till the last strong billow stops the breath,  
Will they believe them in the jaws of Death!

When these my records I reflecting read,  
And find what ills these numerous births  
succeed;

What powerful griefs these nuptial ties attend,  
With what regret these painful journeys end;  
When from the cradle to the grave I look,  
Mine I conceive a melancholy book.

Where now is perfect resignation seen?  
Alas! it is not on the village-green:—  
I've seldom known, though I have often read  
Of happy peasants on their dying-bed;  
Whose looks proclaim'd that sunshine of the breast,

That more than hope, that Heaven itself  
express'd.

What I behold are feverish fits of strife,  
'Twixt fears of dying and desire of life:  
Those earthly hopes, that to the last endure;  
Those fears, that hopes superior fail to cure;  
At best a sad submission to the doom,  
Which, turning from the danger, lets it come.

Sick lies the man, bewilder'd, lost, afraid,  
His spirits vanquish'd and his strength decay'd;

No hope the friend, the nurse, the doctor lend—

'Call then a priest, and fit him for his end.'  
A priest is call'd; 'tis now, alas! too late,  
Death enters with him at the cottage-gate;  
Or time allow'd—he goes, assured to find  
The self-commending, all-confiding mind;

And sighs to hear, what we may justly call  
Death's common-place, the train of thought in  
all.

'Truc, I'm a sinner,' feebly he begins,  
'But trust in Mercy to forgive my sins :'  
(Such cool confession no past crimes excite!  
Such claim on Mercy seems the sinner's right!)  
'I know, mankind are frail, that God is just,  
And pardons those who in his mercy trust;  
We're sorely tempted in a world like this,  
All men have done, and I like all, amiss;  
But now, if spared, it is my full intent  
On all the past to ponder and repent :  
Wrongs against me I pardon great and small,  
And if I die, I die in peace with all.'

His merits thus and not his sins confess'd,  
He speaks his hopes, and leaves to Heaven  
the rest.

Alas ! are these the prospects, dull and cold,  
That dying Christians to their priests unfold ?  
Or mends the prospect when th' enthusiast  
cries,

'I die assured !' and in a rapture dies ?

Ah, where that humble, self-abasing  
mind,

With that confiding spirit, shall we find ;  
The mind that, feeling what repentance  
brings,

Dejection's terrors and Contrition's stings,  
Feels then the hope, that mounts all care  
above,

And the pure joy that flows from pardoning  
love ?

Such have I seen in death, and much  
deplete,

So many dying—that I see no more :

Lo ! now my records, where I grieve to trace,  
How Death has triumph'd in so short a space ;  
Who are the dead, how died they, I relate,  
And snatch some portion of their acts from  
fate.

With Andrew Collett we the year begin,  
The blind, fat landlord of the Old Crown  
Inn,—

Big as his butt, and, for the self-same use,  
To take in stores of strong fermenting juice.  
On his huge chair beside the fire he sate,  
In revel chief, and umpire in debate ;  
Each night his string of vulgar tales he told ;  
When ale was cheap and bachelors were bold :  
His heroes all were famous in their days,  
Cheats were his boast and drunkards had his  
praise ;

'One, in three draughts, three mugs of ale  
took down,  
As mugs were then—the champion of the  
Crown ;

For thrice three days another lived on ale,  
And knew no change but that of mild and stale ;  
Two thirsty soakers watch'd a vessel's side,  
When he the tap, with dexterous hand,  
applied ;

Nor from their seats departed, till they found  
That butt was out and heard the mournful  
sound.'

He praised a poacher, precious child of fun !  
Who shot the keeper with his own spring-gun ;  
Nor less the smuggler who the exciseman tied,  
And left him hanging at the birch-wood side,  
There to expire ;—but one who saw him hang  
Cut the good cord—a traitor of the gang.

His own exploits with boastful glee he told,  
What ponds he emptied and what pikes he  
sold ;

And how, when bless'd with sight alert and  
gay,

The night's amusements kept him through the  
day.

He sang the praises of those times, when all  
'For cards and dice, as for their drink, might  
call ;

When justice wink'd on every jovial crew,  
And ten-pins tumbled in the parson's view.'

He told, when angry wives, provoked to rail,  
Or drive a third-day drunkard from his ale,  
What were his triumphs, and how great the  
skill

That won the vex'd virago to his will ;  
Who raving came ;—then talk'd in milder  
strain,—

Then wept, then drank, and pledged her  
spouse again.

Such were his themes : how knaves o'er  
laws prevail,

Or, when made captives, how they fly from  
jail ;

The young how brave, how subtle were the  
old :

And oaths attested all that Folly told.

On death like his what name shall we  
bestow,

So very sudden ! yet so very slow ?

'Twas slow :—Disease, augmenting year by  
year,

Show'd the grim king by gradual steps  
brought near ;

'Twas not less sudden ; in the night he died,

He drank, he swore, he jested, and he lied ;  
Thus aiding folly with departing breath :—  
' Beware, Lorenzo, the slow-sudden death.'

Next died the Widow Goe, an active dame,  
Famed ten miles round, and worthy all her fame ;

She lost her husband when their loves were young,

But kept her farm, her credit, and her tongue :  
Full thirty years she ruled, with matchless skill,

With guiding judgment and resistless will ;  
Advice she scorn'd, rebellions she suppress'd,  
And sons and servants bow'd at her behest.  
Like that great man's, who to his Saviour came,

Were the strong words of this commanding dame ;—

' Come,' if she said, they came ; if ' go,' were gone ;

And if ' do this,'—that instant it was done :  
Her maidens told she was all eye and ear,  
In darkness saw and could at distance hear ;—  
No parish-business in the place could stir,  
Without direction or assent from her ;  
In turn she took each office as it fell,  
Knew all their duties, and discharged them well ;

The lazy vagrants in her presence shook,  
And pregnant damsels fear'd her stern rebuke ;

She look'd on want with judgment clear and cool,

And felt with reason and bestow'd by rule ;  
She match'd both sons and daughters to her mind,

And lent them eyes, for Love, she heard, was blind ;

Yet ceaseless still she throve, alert, alive,  
The working bee, in full or empty hive ;  
Busy and careful, like that working bee,  
No time for love nor tender cares had she ;  
But when our farmers made their amorous vows,

She talk'd of market-steeds and patent-ploughs.

Not unemploy'd her evenings pass'd away,  
Amusement closed, as business waked the day ;

When to her toilet's brief concern she ran,  
And conversation with her friends began,

Who all were welcome, what they saw, to share ;

And joyous neighbours praised her Christmas fare,

That none around might, in their scorn, complain

Of Gossip Goe as greedy in her gain.

Thus long she reign'd, admired, if not approved ;

Praised, if not honour'd ; fear'd, if not beloved ;—

When, as the busy days of Spring drew near,

That call'd for all the forecast of the year ;  
When lively hope the rising crops survey'd,  
And April promised what September paid ;  
When stray'd her lambs where gorse and greenweed grow ;

When rose her grass in richer vales below ;  
When pleased she look'd on all the smiling land,

And viewed the hinds, who wrought at her command ;

(Poultry in groups still follow'd where she went ;)

Then dread o'ercame her,—that her days were spent.

' Bless me ! I die, and not a warning giv'n,—  
With much to do on Earth, and ALL for Heav'n !—

No reparation for my soul's affairs,  
No leave petition'd for the barn's repairs ;  
Accounts perplex'd, my interest yet unpaid,  
My mind unsettled, and my will unmade ;—  
A lawyer haste, and in your way, a priest ;  
And let me die in one good work at least.'  
She spake, and, trembling, dropp'd upon her knees,

Heaven in her eye and in her hand her keys ;  
And still the more she found her life decay,  
With greater force she grasp'd those signs of sway :

Then fell and died !—In haste her sons drew near,

And dropp'd, in haste, the tributary tear,  
Then from th' adhering clasp the keys unbound,

And consolation for their sorrow found.

Death has his infant-train ; his bony arm  
Strikes from the baby-cheek the rosy charm ;  
The brightest eye his glazing film makes dim,

And his cold touch sets fast the lithest limb :

He seized the sick'ning boy to Gerard lent,<sup>1</sup>  
When three days' life, in feeble cries, were  
spent ;

In pain brought forth, those painful hours to  
stay,

To breathe in pain and sigh its soul away !

' But why thus lent, if thus recall'd again,  
To cause and feel, to live and die in, pain''  
Or rather say, Why grievous these appear,  
If all it pays for Heaven's eternal year ;  
If these sad sobs and piteous sighs secure  
Delights that live, when worlds no more  
endure ?

The sister-spirit long may lodge below,  
And pains from nature, pains from reason,  
know ;

Through all the common ills of life may run,  
By hope perverted and by love undone ;  
A wife's distress, a mother's pangs, may  
dread,

And widow-tears, in bitter anguish, shed ;  
May at old age arrive through numerous  
harms,

With children's children in those feeble arms :  
Nor till by years of want and grief oppress'd,  
Shall the sad spirit flee and be at rest !

Yet happier therefore shall we deem the  
boy,  
Secured from anxious care and dangerous  
joy ?

Not so ! for then would Love Divine in  
vain

Send all the burthens weary men sustain ;  
All that now curb the passions when they  
rage,

The checks of youth and the regrets of  
age ;

All that now bid us hope, believe, endure,  
Our sorrow's comfort and our vice's cure ;  
All that for Heaven's high joys the spirits  
train,

And charity, the crown of all, were vain.

Say, will you call the breathless infant  
bless'd,

Because no cares the silent grave molest ?

So would you deem the nursing from the  
wing

Untimely thrust and never train'd to sing ;  
But far more bless'd the bird whose grateful  
voice

Sings its own joy and makes the woods rejoice,

Though, while untaught, ere yet he charm'd  
the ear,

Hard were his trials and his pains severe !

Next died the Lady who yon Hall possess'd ;  
And here they brought her noble bones to rest.  
In Town shed well ;—forsaken stood the Hall :  
Worms ate the floors, the tap'stry fled the  
wall :

No fire the kitchen's cheerless grate display'd ;  
No cheerful light the long-closed sash con-  
vey'd ;

The crawling worm, that turns a summer-fly,  
Here spun his shroud and laid him up to die  
The winter-death :—upon the bed of state,  
The bat shrill-shrieking woo'd his flickering  
mate ;

To empty rooms the curious came no more,  
From empty cellars turn'd the angry poor,  
And surly beggars cursed the ever-bolted  
door.

To one small room the steward found his way,  
Where tenants follow'd to complain and pay ;  
Yet no complaint before the Lady came,  
The feeling servant spared the feeble dame ;  
Who saw her farms with his observing eyes,  
And answer'd all requests with his replies :—  
She came not down, her falling groves to view ;  
Why should she know, what one so faithful  
knew ?

Why come, from many clamorous tongues to  
hear,

What one so just might whisper in her ear ?  
Her oaks or acres, why with care explore ;  
Why learn the wants, the sufferings of the  
poor ;

When one so knowing all their worth could  
trace,

And one so piteous govern'd in her place ?

Lo ! now, what dismal sons of Darkness  
come,

To bear this daughter of Indulgence home ;  
Tragedians all, and well arranged in black !  
Who nature, feeling, force, expression lack ;  
Who cause no tear, but gloomily pass by,  
And shake their sables in the wearied eye,  
That turns disgusted from the pompous scene,  
Proud without grandeur, with profusion,  
mean !

The tear of kindness past affection owes ;  
For worth deceased the sigh from reason  
flows ;

E'en well-feign'd passion for our sorrows call,  
And real tears for mimic miseries fall :

<sup>1</sup> See p. 56.

But this poor farce has neither truth nor art,  
To please the fancy or to touch the heart ;  
Unlike the darkness of the sky, that pours  
On the dry ground its fertilizing showers ;  
Unlike to that which strikes the soul with  
dread,

When thunders roar and forked fires are shed ;  
Dark but not awful, dismal but yet mean,  
With anxious bustle moves the cumbrous  
scene ;

Presents no objects tender or profound,  
But spreads its cold unmeaning gloom around.

When woes are feign'd, how ill such forms  
appear ;

And oh ! how needless, when the wo's sincere.  
Slow to the vault they come, with heavy  
tread,

Bending beneath the Lady and her lead ;  
A case of elm surrounds that ponderous chest,  
Close on that case the crimson velvet's press'd ;  
Ungenerous this, that to the worm denies,  
With niggard-caution, his appointed prize ;  
For now, ere yet he works his tedious way,  
Through cloth and wood and metal to his prey,  
That prey dissolving shall a mass remain,  
That fancy loathes and worms themselves  
disdain.

But see ! the master-mourner makes his way,  
To end his office for the coffin'd clay ;  
Pleased that our rustic men and maids behold  
His plate like silver, and his studs like gold,  
As they approach to spell the age, the name,  
And all the titles of th' illustrious dame.—  
This as (my duty done) some scholar read,  
A village-father look'd disdain and said :  
' Away, my friends ! why take such pains to  
know

What some brave marble soon in church shall  
show ?

Where not alone her gracious name shall stand,  
But how she lived—the blessing of the land ;  
How much we all deplored the noble dead,  
What groans we utter'd and what tears we  
shed ;

Tears, true as those, which in the sleepy eyes  
Of weeping cherubs on the stone shall rise ;  
Tears, true as those, which, ere she found her  
grave,

The noble Lady to our sorrows gave.'

Down by the church-way walk and where  
the brook

Winds round the chancel like a shepherd's  
crook ;

In that small house, with those green pales  
before,

Where jasmine trails on either side the door ;  
Where those dark shrubs that now grow wild  
at will,

Were clipp'd in form and tantalized with  
skill ;

Where cocks blanch'd and pebbles neatly  
spread,

Form'd shining borders for the larkspurs'  
bed ;—

There lived a Lady, wise, austere, and nice,  
Who show'd her virtue by her scorn of vice ;  
In the dear fashions of her youth she dress'd,  
A pea-green Joseph was her favourite vest ;  
Erect she stood, she walk'd with stately mien,  
Tight was her length of stays, and she was  
tall and lean.

There long she lived in maiden-state im-  
mured,

From looks of love and treacherous man  
secured ;

Though evil fame—(but that was long before)  
Had blown her dubious blast at Catherine's  
door :

A Captain thither, rich from India came,  
And though a cousin call'd, it touch'd her  
fame :

Her annual stipend rose from his behest,  
And all the long-prized treasures she pos-  
sess'd :—

If aught like joy awhile appear'd to stay  
In that stern face, and chase those frowns  
away ;

'Twas when her treasures she disposed, for  
view,

And heard the praises to their splendour due ;  
Silks beyond price, so rich, they'd stand  
alone,

And diamonds blazing on the buckled zone ;  
Rows of rare pearls by curious workmen set,  
And bracelets fair in box of glossy jet ;  
Bright polish'd amber precious from its size,  
Of forms the fairest fancy could devise :

Her drawers of cedar, shut with secret springs,  
Conceal'd the watch of gold and rubied rings ;  
Letters, long proofs of love, and verses fine  
Round the pink'd rims of crisped Valentine.

Her china-closet, cause of daily care,  
For woman's wonder held her pencil'd ware ;  
That pictured wealth of China and Japan,  
Like its cold mistress, shunn'd the eye of  
• man.

Her neat small room, adorn'd with maiden-taste,  
A clipp'd French puppy, first of favourites, graced :

A parrot next, but dead and stuff'd with art;  
(For Poll, when living, lost the Lady's heart,  
And then his life; for he was heard to speak  
Such frightful words as tinged his Lady's cheek :)

Unhappy bird ! who had no power to prove,  
Save by such speech, his gratitude and love.  
A grey old cat his whiskers lick'd beside ;  
A type of sadness in the house of pride.  
The polish'd surface of an India chest,  
A glassy globe, in frame of ivory, press'd ;  
Where swam two finny creatures ; one of gold,

Of silver one ; both beauteous to behold :—  
All these were form'd the guiding taste to suit ;  
The beasts well-manner'd and the fishes mute.  
A widow'd Aunt was there, compell'd by need  
The nymph to flatter and her tribe to feed ;  
Who, veiling well her scorn, endured the clog,  
Mute as the fish and fawning as the dog.

As years increased, these treasures, her delight,

Arose in value in their owner's sight :  
A miser knows that, view it as he will,  
A guinea kept is but a guinea still ;  
And so he puts it to its proper use,  
That something more this guinea may produce :

But silks and rings, in the possessor's eyes,  
The oft'ner seen, the more in value rise,  
And thus are wisely hoarded to bestow  
The kind of pleasure that with years will grow.

But what avail'd their worth—if worth had they,—

In the sad summer of her slow decay ?

Then we beheld her turn an anxious look  
From trunks and chests, and fix it on her book,—

A rich-bound Book of Prayer the Captain gave,

(Some Princess had it, or was said to have ;)  
And then once more, on all her stores, look round,

And draw a sigh so piteous and profound,  
That told, 'Alas ! how hard from these to part,

And for new hopes and habits form the heart !  
What shall I do, (she cried) my peace of mind  
To gain in dying, and to die resign'd ?

'Hear,' we return'd ;—'these baubles cast aside,

Nor give thy God a rival in thy pride ;  
Thy closets shut, and ope thy kitchen's door ;  
There own thy failings, *here* invite the poor ;  
A friend of Mammon let thy bounty make ;  
For widows' prayers, thy vanities forsake ;  
And let the hungry, of thy pride, partake :  
Then shall thy inward eye with joy survey  
The angel Mercy tempering Death's delay !'

Alas ! 'twas hard ; the treasures still had charms,

Hope still its flattery, sickness its alarms ;  
Still was the same unsettled, clouded view,  
And the same plaintive cry, 'What shall I do ?'

Nor change appear'd : for when her race was run,

Doubtful we all exclaim'd, 'What has been done ?'

Apart she lived, and still she lies alone ;  
Yon earthly heap awaits the flattering stone,  
On which invention shall be long employ'd,  
To show the various worth of Catherine Lloyd.

Next to these ladies, but in nought allied,  
A noble Peasant, Isaac Ashford, died.

Noble he was, contemplating all things mean,  
His truth unquestion'd and his soul serene :  
Of no man's presence Isaac felt afraid ;  
At no man's question Isaac look'd dismay'd :  
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace ;  
Truth, simple truth, was written in his face ;  
Yet while the serious thought his soul approved,

Cheerful he seem'd, and gentleness beloved :  
To bliss domestic he his heart resign'd,

And, with the firmest, had the fondest mind :  
Were others joyful, he look'd smiling on,

And gave allowance where he needed none ;  
Good he refused with future ill to buy,

Nor knew a joy that caused reflection's sigh ;  
A friend to virtue, his unclouded breast

No envy stung, no jealousy distress'd ;  
(Bane of the poor ! it wounds their weaker mind,

To miss one favour which their neighbours find :)

Yet far was he from stoic pride removed ;  
He felt humanely, and he warmly loved :

I mark'd his action, when his infant died,  
And his old neighbour for offence was tried ;

The still tears, stealing down that furrow'd cheek,

Spoke pity, plainer than the tongue can speak.



If pride were his, 'twas not their vulgar pride,  
Who, in their base contempt, the great deride;  
Nor pride in learning,—though my clerk  
agreed,

If fates should call him, Ashford might succeed;  
Nor pride in rustic skill, although we knew  
None his superior, and his equals few :—  
But if that spirit in his soul had place,  
It was the jealous pride that shuns disgrace;  
A pride in honest fame, by virtue gain'd,  
In sturdy boys to virtuous labours train'd;  
Pride, in the power that guards his country's  
coast,

And all that Englishmen enjoy and boast;  
Pride, in a life that slander's tongue defied,—  
In fact, a noble passion, misnamed pride.

He had no party's rage, no sect'ry's whim;  
Christian and countryman was all with him:  
True to his church he came; no Sunday-  
shower

Kept him at home in that important hour;  
Nor his firm feet could one persuading sect,  
By the strong glare of their new light, direct;—  
On hope, in mine own sober light, I gaze,  
But should be blind and lose it, in your blaze.

In times severe, when many a sturdy swain  
Felt it his pride, his comfort, to complain;  
Isaac their wants would soothe, his own would  
hide,

And feel in that his comfort and his pride.

At length he found, when seventy years  
were run,

His strength departed, and his labour done;  
When he, save honest fame, retain'd no more,  
But lost his wife and saw his children poor:  
'Twas then, a spark of—say not discontent—  
Struck on his mind, and thus he gave it vent:

'Kind are your laws, ('tis not to be denied,)   
That in yon house, for ruin'd age, provide,  
And they are just;—when young, we give  
you all,

And for assistance in our weakness call.—  
Why then this proud reluctance to be fed,  
To join your poor, and eat the parish-bread?  
But yet I linger, loth with him to feed,  
Who gains his plenty by the sons of need;  
He who, by contract, all your paupers took,  
And gauges stomachs with an anxious look:  
On some old master I could well depend;  
See him with joy and thank him as a friend;  
But ill on him, who doles the day's supply,  
And counts our chances, who at night may  
die:

Yet help me, Heaven! and let me not com-  
plain

Of what I suffer, but my fate sustain.'

Such were his thoughts, and so resign'd he  
grew;

Daily he placed the workhouse in his view!  
But came not there, for sudden was his fate,  
He dropp'd, expiring, at his cottage-gate.

I feel his absence in the hours of prayer,  
And view his seat and sigh for Isaac there:  
I see no more those white locks thinly spread  
Round the bald polish of that honour'd head;  
No more that awful glance on playful wight,  
Compell'd to kneel and tremble at the sight,  
To fold his fingers, all in dread the while,  
Till Mister Ashford soften'd to a smile;

No more that meek and suppliant look in  
prayer,

Nor the pure faith (to give it force), are  
there:—

But he is bless'd, and I lament no more

A wise good man contented to be poor.

Then died a Rambler; not the one who  
sails

And trucks, for female favours, beads and  
nails;

Not one, who posts from place to place—of  
men

And manners treating with a flying pen;  
Not he, who climbs, for prospects, Snowden's  
height,

And chides the clouds that intercept the sight;  
No curious shell, rare plant, or brilliant spar,  
Enticed our traveller from his home so far;  
But all the reason, by himself assign'd  
For so much rambling, was, a restless mind;  
As on, from place to place, without intent,  
Without reflection, Robin Dingley went.

Not thus, by nature;—never man was found  
Less prone to wander from his parish-bound:  
Claudian's old Man, to whom all scenes were  
new,

Save those where he and where his apples  
grew,

Resembled Robin, who around would look,  
And his horizon, for the earth's, mistook.

To this poor swain a keen Attorney came;—  
'I give thee joy, good fellow! on thy name;  
The rich old Dingley's dead;—no child has he,  
Nor wife, nor will; his ALL is left for thee:  
To be his fortune's heir thy claim is good;  
Thou hast the name, and we will prove the  
blood.'

The claim was made; 'twas tried,—it would not stand ;

They proved the blood; but were refused the land.

Assured of wealth, this man of simple heart,  
To every friend had predisposed a part :  
His wife had hopes indulged of various kind ;  
The three Miss Dingleys had their school assign'd,

Masters were sought for what they each required,

And books were bought and harpsichords were hired :

So high was hope :—the failure touch'd his brain,

And Robin never was himself again ;  
Yet he no wrath, no angry wish express'd,  
But tried, in vain, to labour or to rest ;  
Then cast his bundle on his back, and went  
He knew not whither, not for what intent.

Years fled ;—of Robin all remembrance past,

When home he wander'd in his rags at last :  
A sailor's jacket on his limbs was thrown,

A sailor's story he had made his own ;  
Had suffer'd battles, prisons, tempests, storms,

Encountering death in all his ugliest forms :  
His cheeks were haggard, hollow was his eye,  
Where madness lurk'd, conceal'd in misery ;  
Want, and th' ungentle world, had taught a part,

And prompted cunning to that simple heart :  
' He now bethought him, he would roam no more,

But live at home and labour as before.'

Here clothed and fed, no sooner he began  
To round and redden, than away he ran ;  
His wife was dead, their children past his aid :  
So, unmolested, from his home he stray'd :  
Six years elapsed, when, worn with want and pain,

Came Robin, wrapt in all his rags, again :—  
We chide, we pity ;—placed among our poor,  
He fed again, and was a man once more.

As when a gaunt and hungry fox is found,  
Entrapp'd alive in some rich hunter's ground ;  
Fed for the field, although each day *'sa* feast,  
*Fatten* you may, but never *tame* the beast ;  
A house protects him, savoury viands sustain ;  
But loose his neck and off he goes again :  
So stole our vagrant from his warm retreat,  
To rove a prowler and be deemed a cheat.

Hard was his fare ; for, him at length we saw,

In cart convey'd and laid supine on straw.  
His feeble voice now spoke a sinking heart ;  
His groans now told the motions of the cart ;  
And when it stopp'd, he tried in vain to stand ;

Closed was his eye, and clench'd his clammy hand ;

Life ebb'd apace, and our best aid no more  
Could his weak sense or dying heart restore :  
But now he fell, a victim to the snare,  
That vile attorneys for the weak prepare ;—  
They who, when profit or resentment call,  
Heed not the groaning victim they enthrall.

Then died lamented, in the strength of life,  
A valued Mother and a faithful Wife ;  
Call'd not away, when time had loosed each hold

On the fond heart, and each desire grew cold ;  
But when, to all that knit us to our kind,  
She felt fast-bound, as charity can bind ;—  
Not when the ills of age, its pain, its care,  
The drooping spirit for its fate prepare ;  
And, each affection failing, leaves the heart  
Loosed from life's charm and willing to de-

part ;—  
But all her ties the strong invader broke,  
In all their strength, by one tremendous stroke !

Sudden and swift the eager pest came on,  
And terror grew, till every hope was gone :  
Still those around appear'd for hope to seek !  
But view'd the sick and were afraid to speak.—  
Slowly they bore, with solemn step, the dead ;

When grief grew loud and bitter tears were shed :

My part began ; a crowd drew near the place,  
Awe in each eye, alarm in every face :  
So swift the ill, and of so fierce a kind,  
That fear with pity mingled in each mind ;  
Friends with the husband came their griefs to blend ;

For good-man Frankford was to all a friend.  
The last-born boy they held above the bier,  
He knew not grief, but cries express'd his fear ;  
Each different age and sex reveal'd its pain,  
In now a louder, now a lower strain ;  
While the meek father, listening to their tones,  
Swell'd the full cadence of the grief by groans.

The elder sister strove her pangs to hide,  
And soothing words to younger minds applied :

'Be still, be patient,' oft she strove to say ;  
But fail'd as oft, and weeping turn'd away.

Curious and sad, upon the fresh-dug hill,  
The village-lads stood melancholy still ;  
And idle children, wandering to-and-fro,  
As Nature guided, took the tone of wo.

Arrived at home, how then they gazed  
around,

In every place,—where she—no more was  
found ;—

The seat at table she was wont to fill ;  
The fire-side chair, still set, but vacant still ;  
The garden-walks, a labour all her own ;  
The latticed bower, with trailing shrubs o'er-  
grown ;

The Sunday-pew she fill'd with all her race,—  
Each place of hers, was now a sacred place,  
That, while it call'd up sorrows in the eyes,  
Pierced the full heart and forced them still to  
rise.

Oh sacred sorrow ! by whom souls are tried,  
Sent not to punish mortals, but to guide ;  
If thou art mine, (and who shall proudly dare  
To tell his Maker, he has had his share ?)  
Still let me feel for what thy pangs are sent,  
And be my guide and not my punishment !

Of Leah Cousins next the name appears,  
With honours crown'd and bless'd with length  
of years,

Save that she lived to feel, in life's decay,  
The pleasure die, the honours drop away ;  
A matron she, whom every village-wife  
View'd as the help and guardian of her life ;  
Fathers and sons, indebted to her aid,  
Respect to her and her profession paid ;  
Who in the house of plenty largely fed,  
Yet took her station at the pauper's bed ;  
Nor from that duty could be bribed again,  
While fear or danger urged her to remain ;  
In her experience all her friends relied,  
Heaven was her help and nature was her  
guide.

Thus Leah lived ; long trusted, much  
caress'd,

Till a Town-Dame a youthful Farmer bless'd ;  
A gay vain bride, who would example give  
To that poor village where she deign'd to live ;  
Some few months past, she sent, in hour of  
need,

For Doctor Glibb, who came with wond'rous  
speed :

Two days he waited, all his art applied,  
To save the mother when her infant died :—

'Twas well I came,' at last he deign'd to  
say ;

'Twas wond'rous well ;—and proudly rode  
away.

The news ran round ;—'How vast the Doc-  
tor's pow'r !

He saved the Lady in the trying hour ;  
Saved her from death, when she was dead to  
hope,

And her fond husband had resign'd her up :  
So all, like her, may evil fate defy,  
If Doctor Glibb, with saving hand, be nigh.  
'Fame (now his friend), fear, novelty, and  
whim,

And fashion, sent the varying sex to him :  
From this, contention in the village rose ;  
And these the Dame espoused ; the Doctor  
those :

The wealthier part, to him and science went ;  
With luck and her the poor remain'd content.

The matron sigh'd ; for she was vex'd at  
heart,

With so much profit, so much fame, to part :  
'So long successful in my art,' she cried,  
'And this proud man, so young and so un-  
tried !

'Nay,' said the Doctor, 'dare you trust  
your wives,

The joy, the pride, the solace of your lives,  
To one who acts and knows no reason why,  
But trusts, poor hag ! to luck for an ally ?—  
Who, on experience, can her claims advance,  
And own the powers of accident and chance ?  
A whining dame, who prays in danger's view,  
(A proof she knows not what beside to do ;)  
What's her experience ? In the time that's  
gone,

Blundering she wrought and still she blunders  
on ;—

And what is Nature ? One who acts in aid  
Of gossips half asleep, and half afraid :  
With such allies I scorn my fame to blend,  
Skill is my luck and courage is my friend :  
No slave to Nature, 'tis my chief delight  
To win my way and act in her despite :—  
Trust then my art, that, in itself complete,  
Needs no assistance and fears no defeat.'

Warm'd by her well-spiced ale and aiding  
pipe,

The angry matron grew for contest ripe.

'Can you,' she said, 'ungrateful and un-  
just,

Before experience, ostentation trust !

What is your hazard, foolish daughters, tell ?  
If safe, you're certain ; if secure, you're well :  
That I have luck must fiend and foe confess,  
And what's good judgment but a lucky guess ?  
*He* boasts but what he *can* do :—will you run  
From me, your friend ! who, all *he* boasts,  
*have* done ?

By proud and learned words his powers are  
known ;

By healthy boys and handsome girls my own :  
Wives ! fathers ! children ! by my help you  
live ;

Has this pale Doctor more than life to give ?  
No stunted cripple hops the village round ;  
Your hands are active and your heads are  
sound :

My lads are all your fields and flocks require ;  
My lasses all those sturdy lads admire.

Can this proud leech, with all his boasted skill,  
Amend the soul or body, wit or will ?

Does he for courts the sons of farmers frame,  
Or make the daughter differ from the dame ?

Or, whom he brings into this world of wo,  
Prepares he them their part to undergo ?

If not, this stranger from your doors repel,  
And be content to *be* and to *be well* .

She spake ; but, ah ! with words too strong  
and plain ;

Her warmth offended, and her truth was vain :  
The *many* left her, and the friendly *few*,

If never colder, yet they older grew ;  
Till, unemploy'd, she felt her spirits droop,

And took, insidious aid ! th' inspiring cup ;  
Grew poor and peevish as her powers decay'd,  
And propp'd the tottering frame with stronger  
aid,—

Then died !—I saw our careful swains convey,  
From this our changeful world, the matron's  
clay,

Who to this world, at least, with equal care,  
Brought them its changes, good and ill to  
share.

Now to his grave was Roger Cuff convey'd,  
And strong resentment's lingering spirit laid.  
Shipwreck'd in youth, he home return'd, and  
found

His brethren there—and thrice they wish'd  
him drown'd.

' Is this a landman's love ? Be certain then,  
We part for ever ! '—and they cried, ' Amen ! '

His words were truth's :—Some forty sum-  
mers fled ;

His brethren died ; his kin supposed him dead :

Three nephews these, one sprightly niece, and  
one,

Less near in blood—they call'd him *surlly*  
*John* ;

He worked in woods apart from all his kind,  
Fierce were his looks and moody was his  
mind.

For home the Sailor now began to sigh :—  
' The dogs are dead, and I'll return and die ;

When all I have, my gains, in years of care,  
The younger Cuffs with kinder souls shall  
share :—

Yet hold ! I'm rich ;—with one consent they'll  
say,

" You're welcome, Uncle, as the flowers in  
May."

No ; I'll disguise me, be in tatters dress'd,  
And best befriend the lads who treat me  
best.

Now all his kindred,—neither rich nor  
poor,—

Kept the wolf want some distance from the  
door.

In piteous plight he knock'd at George's  
gate,

And begg'd for aid, as he described his  
state :—

But stern was George ;—' Let them who had  
thee strong,

Help thee to drag thy weaken'd frame along ;  
To us a stranger, while your limbs would  
move,

From us depart and try a stranger's love :—  
Ha ! dost thou murmur ? '—for, in Roger's  
throat,

Was ' Rascal ! ' rising with disdainful note.

To pious James he then his prayer ad-  
dress'd ;—

' Good lack,' quoth James, ' thy sorrows  
pierce my breast ;

And, had I wealth, as have my brethren  
twain,

One board should feed us and one roof con-  
tain :

But plead I will thy cause and I will pray :  
And so farewell ! Heaven help thee on thy  
way ! '

' Scoundrel ! ' said Roger, (but apart) ;—  
and told

His case to Peter ;—Peter too was cold :—  
' The rates are high ; we have a-many poor ;

But I will think,'—he said, and shut the  
door.

Then the gay Niece the seeming pauper  
press'd :—

'Turn, Nancy, turn, and view this form dis-  
tress'd :

Akin to thine is this declining frame,  
And this poor beggar claims an Uncle's  
name.'

'Avaunt! begone!' the courteous maiden  
said,

Thou vile impostor! Uncle Roger's dead :  
I hate thee, beast ; thy look my spirit shocks !  
Oh ! that I saw thee starving in the stocks !'

'My gentle niece!' he said—and sought the  
wood.—

'I hunger, fellow ; prithee, give me food !'

'Give ! am I rich ? This hatchet take, and  
try

Thy proper strength, nor give those limbs the  
lie ;

Work, feed thyself, to thine own powers  
appeal,

Nor whine out woes, thine own right-hand  
can heal :

And while that hand is thine and thine a leg,  
Scorn of the proud or of the base to beg.'

'Come, surly John, thy wealthy kinsman  
view.'

Old Roger said :—'thy words are brave and  
true ;

Come, live with me : we'll vex those scoundrel  
boys,

And that prim shrew shall, envying, hear our  
joys.—

Tobacco's glorious fume all day we'll share,  
With beef and brandy kill all kinds of care ;  
We'll beer and biscuit on our table heap,  
And rail at rascals, till we fall asleep.'

Such was their life : but when the wood-  
man died,

His grieving kin for Roger's smiles applied—  
In vain ; he shut, with stern rebuke, the  
door,

And dying, built a refuge for the poor ;  
With this restriction, That no Cuff should  
share

One meal, or shelter for one moment there.

My record ends :—But hark ! e'en now  
I hear

The bell of death, and know not whose to  
fear :

Our farmers all, and all our hinds were well ;  
In no man's cottage danger seem'd to  
dwell ;—

Yet death of man proclaim these heavy chimes,  
For thrice they sound, with pausing space,  
three times. "

'Go ; of my sexton seek, Whose days are  
sped ?—

What ! he, himself !—and is old Dibble  
dead ?'

His eightieth year he reach'd, still undecay'd,  
And rectors five to one close vault con-  
vey'd :—

But he is gone ; his care and skill I lose,  
And gain a mournful subject for my Muse :  
His masters lost, he'd oft in turn deplore,  
And kindly add,—'Heaven grant, I lose no  
more !'

Yet, while he spake, a sly and pleasant glance  
Appear'd at variance with his complaisance :  
For, as he told their fate and varying worth,  
He archly look'd,—'I yet may bear thee  
forth.'

'When first'—(he so began)—'my trade I  
plied,

Good master Addle was the parish-guide ;  
His clerk and sexton, I beheld with fear  
His stride majestic, and his frown severe ;  
A noble pillar of the church he stood,  
Adorn'd with college-gown and parish-hood :  
Then as he paced the hallow'd aisles about,  
He fill'd the sevenfold surplice fairly out !  
But in his pulpit, wearied down with prayer,  
He sat and seem'd as in his study's chair ;  
For while the anthem swell'd, and when it  
ceased,

Th' expecting people view'd their slumbering  
priest :

Who, dozing, died.—Our Parson Peele was  
next ;

"I will not spare you," was his favourite  
text ;

Nor did he spare, but raised them many a  
pound ;

Ev'n me he mulct for my poor rood of ground ;  
Yet cared he nought, but with a glibing  
speech,

"What should I do," quoth he, "but what  
I preach ?"

His piercing jokes (and he'd a plenteous store)  
Were daily offer'd both to rich and poor ;  
His scorn, his love, in playful words he spoke ;  
His pity, praise, and promise, were a joke :  
But though so young and bless'd with spirits  
high,

He died as grave as any judge could die :

The strong attack subdued his lively powers,—  
His was the grave, and Doctor Grandspear  
ours.

‘Then were there golden times the village  
round ;

In his abundance all appear’d t’ abound ;  
Liberal and rich, a plenteous board he spread,  
E’en cool Dissenters at his table fed ;  
Who wish’d, and hoped,—and thought a man  
so kind

A way to Heaven, though not their own,  
might find ;

To them, to all, he was polite and free,  
Kind to the poor, and, ah ! most kind to me :  
“ Ralph,” would he say, “ Ralph Dibble, thou  
art old ;

“ That doublet fit, ’twill keep thee from the  
cold :

How does my Sexton ?—What ! the times  
are hard ;

Drive that stout pig, and pen him in thy  
yard.”

But most, his rev’rece loved a mirthful  
jest :—

“ Thy coat is thin ; why, man, thou’rt *barely*  
dress’d ;

It’s worn to th’ thread : but I have nappy  
beer ;

Clap that within, and see how they will  
wear !”

‘Gay days were these ; but they were  
quickly past :

When first he came, we found he cou’dn’t  
last :

A whoreson cough (and at the fall of leaf)  
Upset him quite :—but what’s the gain of  
grief ?

‘Then came the Author-Rector: his delight  
Was all in books ; to read them, or to write :  
Women and men he strove alike to shun,  
And hurried homeward when his tasks were  
done :

Courteous enough, but careless what he said,  
For points of learning he reserved his head ;  
And when addressing either poor or rich,  
He knew no better than his cassock which :  
He, like an osier, was of pliant kind,  
Erect by nature, but to bend inclined ;  
Not like a creeper falling to the ground,  
Or meanly catching on the neighbours  
round :—

Careless was he of surplice, hood, and band,—  
And kindly took them as they came to hand :

Nor, like the doctor, wore a world of hat,  
As if he sought for dignity in that :  
He talk’d, he gave, but not with cautious  
rules :—

Nor turn’d from gipsies, vagabonds, or fools ;  
It was his nature, but they thought it whim,  
And so our beaux and beauties turn’d from  
him :

Of questions, much he wrote, profound and  
dark,—

How spake the serpent, and where stopp’d  
the ark ;

From what far land the Queen of Sheba came ;  
Who Salem’s priest, and what his father’s  
name ;

He made the Song of Songs its mysteries  
yield,

And Revelations, to the world, reveal’d.

He sleeps i’ the aisle,—but not a stone records  
His name or fame, his actions or his words :

And truth, your reverence, when I look  
around,

And mark the tombs in our sepulchral  
ground,

(Though dare I not of one man’s hope to  
doubt),

I’d join the party who repose without.

‘Next came a youth from Cambridge, and,  
in truth,

He was a sober and a comely youth ;

He blush’d in meekness as a modest man,

And gain’d attention ere his task began ;

When preaching, seldom ventured on reproof,  
But touch’d his neighbours tenderly enough.

Him, in his youth, a clamorous sect assail’d,  
Advised and censured, flatter’d,—and pre-  
vail’d.—

Then did he much his sober hearers vex,  
Confound the simple, and the sad perplex ;  
To a new style his reverence rashly took ;  
Loud grew his voice, to threat’ning swell’d his  
look ;

Above, below, on either side, he gazed,

Amazing all, and most himself amazed :

No more he read his preachments pure and  
plain,

But launch’d outright, and rose and sank  
again :

At times he smiled in scorn, at times he  
wept,

And such sad coil with words of vengeance  
kept,

That our best sleepers started as they slept.

"Conviction comes like lightning," he would cry ;

"In vain you seek it, and in vain you fly ;  
'Tis like the rushing of the mighty wind,  
Unseen its progress, but its power you find ;  
It strikes the child ere yet its reason wakes ;  
His reason fled, the ancient sire it shakes ;  
The proud, learn'd man, and him who loves  
to know

How and from whence these gusts of grace  
will blow,

It shuns,—but sinners in their way impedes,  
And sots and harlots visits in their deeds :  
Of faith and penance it supplies the place ;  
Assures the vilest that they live by grace,  
And, without running, makes them win the  
race."

"Such was the doctrine our young prophet  
taught ;

And here conviction, there confusion  
wrought ;

When his thin cheek assumed a deadly hue,  
And all the rose to one small spot withdrew :  
They call'd it hectic ; 'twas a fiery flush,  
More fix'd and deeper than the maiden blush ;  
His paler lips the pearly teeth disclosed,  
And lab'ring lungs the length'ning speech  
opposed.

No more his span-girth shanks and quiv'ring  
thighs

Upheld a body of the smaller size ;

But down he sank upon his dying bed,  
And gloomy crotchets fill'd his wandering  
head.—

"Spite of my faith, all-saving faith," he  
cried,

"I fear of worldly works the wicked pride ;  
Poor as I am, degraded, abject, blind,  
The good I've wrought still rankles in my  
mind ;

My alms-deeds all, and every deed I've  
done,

My moral-rags defile me every one ;  
It should not be :—what say'st thou ? tell  
me, Ralph."

Quoth I, "Your reverence, I believe, you're  
safe ;

Your faith's your prop, nor have you pass'd  
such time

In life's good-works as swell them to a crime.  
If I of pardon for my sins were sure,

About my goodness I would rest secure."

"Such was his end ; and mine approaches  
fast ;

I've seen my best of preachers,—and my  
last."

He bow'd, and archly smiled at what he  
said,

Civil but sly :—'And is old Dibble dead ?'

Yes ! he is gone : and we are going all ;

Like flowers we wither, and like leaves we  
fall ;—

Here, with an infant, joyful sponsors come,  
Then bear the new-made Christian to its  
home ;

A few short years and we behold him  
stand,

To ask a blessing, with his bride in hand :

A few, still seeming shorter, and we hear  
His widow weeping at her husband's bier :—

Thus, as the months succeed, shall infants  
take

Their names ; thus parents shall the child  
forsake ;

Thus brides again and bridegrooms blithe  
shall kneel,

By love or law compell'd their vows to  
seal,

Ere I again, or one like me, explore

These simple annals of the VILLAGE POOR.

# THE BIRTH OF FLATTERY

[1807]

Omnia habeo, neque quicquam habeo ;

Quidquid dicunt, laudo ; id rursus si negant,  
laudo id quoque :

Negat quis, nego ; ait, aio :

Postremo imperavi egomet mihi

Omnia assentari.

TERENTI. in *Eunuch.* Act II, Sc. 2, v. 12, . . .  
20, 21.

It has been held in ancient rules,  
That flattery is the food of fools ;  
Yet now and then your men of wit  
Will condescend to taste a bit.

SWIFT, *Cadenus and Fanessa*, l. 758.

The Subject—Poverty and Cunning described  
—When united, a jarring Couple—Mutual  
Reproof—The Wife consoled by a Dream  
—Birth of a Daughter—Description and  
Prediction of Envy—How to be rendered  
ineffectual, explained in a Vision—Simula-  
tion foretells the future Success and  
Triumphs of Flattery—Her Power over  
various Characters and different Minds ;  
over certain Classes of Men ; over Envy  
himself—Her successful Art of softening  
the Evils of Life ; of changing Characters ;  
of meliorating Prospects, and affixing Value  
to Possessions, Pictures, &c.—Conclusion.

MUSE of my Spenser, who so well could sing  
The passions all, their bearings and their  
ties ;

Who could in view those shadowy beings  
bring,

And with bold hand remove each dark  
disguise,

Wherein love, hatred, scorn, or anger lies :  
Guide him to Fairy-land, who now intends

That way his flight ; assist him as he flies,  
To mark those passions, Virtue's foes and  
friends,

By whom when led she droops, when leading  
she ascends.

Yes ! they appear, I see the fairy-train !

And who that modest nymph of meek  
address ?

Not Vanity, though loved by all the vain ;

Not Hope, though promising to all success ;

Nor Mirth, nor Joy, though foe to all dis-  
tress ;

Thee, sprightly syren, from this train I choose,

Thy birth relate, thy soothing arts confess ;

'Tis not in thy mild nature to refuse,

When poets ask thine aid, so oft their need  
and muse.

In Fairy-land, on wide and cheerless plain,  
Dwelt, in the house of Care, a sturdy swain ;  
A hireling he, who, when he till'd the soil,  
Look'd to the pittance that repaid his toil ;  
And to a master left the mingled joy  
And anxious care that follow'd his employ :  
Sullen and patient he at once appear'd,  
As one who murmur'd, yet as one who fear'd ;  
Th' attire was coarse that clothed his sinewy  
frame,

Rude his address, and Poverty his name.

In that same plain a nymph, of curious  
taste,

A cottage (plann'd with all her skill) had  
placed ;

Strange the materials, and for what design'd

The various parts, no simple man might find ;  
What seem'd the door, each entering guest

withstood,

What seem'd a window was but painted wood ;

But by a secret spring the wall would move,

And daylight drop through glassy door above :

'Twas all her pride, new traps for praise to  
lay,

And all her wisdom was to hide her way ;

In small attempts incessant were her pains,  
And Cunning was her name among the swains.



Now, whether fate decreed this pair should wed,  
 And blindly drove them to the marriage-bed ;  
 Or whether love in some soft hour inclined  
 The damsel's heart, and won her to be kind,  
 Is yet unsung : they were an ill-match'd pair,  
 But both disposed to wed—and wed they were.  
 Yet, though united in their fortune, still  
 Their ways were diverse ; varying was their will ;  
 Nor long the maid had bless'd the simple man,  
 Before dissensions rose, and she began :—  
 ' Wretch that I am ! since to thy fortune bound,  
 What plan, what project, with success is crown'd ?  
 I, who a thousand secret arts possess,  
 Who every rank approach with right address ;  
 Who've loosed a guinea from a miser's chest,  
 And worm'd his secret from a traitor's breast ;  
 Thence gifts and gains collecting, great and small,  
 Have brought to thee, and thou consum'st them all :  
 For wantlike thine—a bog without a base—  
 Ingulfs all gains I gather for the place ;  
 Feeding, unfill'd ; destroying, undestroy'd ;  
 It craves for ever, and is ever void :—  
 Wretch that I am ! what misery have I found,  
 Since my sure craft was to thy calling bound !'  
 ' Oh ! vaunt of worthless art,' the swain replied,  
 Scowling contempt, ' how pitiful this pride !  
 What are these specious gifts, these paltry gains,  
 But base rewards for ignominious pains ?  
 With all thy tricking, still for bread we strive,  
 Thine is, proud wretch ! the care that cannot thrive ;  
 By all thy boasted skill and baffled books,  
 Thou gain'st no more than students by their books ;  
 No more than I for my poor deeds am paid,  
 Whom none can blame, will help, or dare upbraid.  
 ' Call this our need, a bog that all devours,—  
 Then what thy petty arts, but summer-flowers,  
 Gaudy and mean, and serving to betray  
 The place they make unprofitably gay ?

Who know it not, some useless beauties see,—  
 But ah ! to prove it, was reserved for me.'  
 Unhappy state ! that, in decay of love,  
 Permits harsh truth his errors to disprove ;  
 While he remains, to wrangle and to jar,  
 Is friendly tournament, not fatal war ;  
 Love in his play will borrow arms of hate,  
 Anger and rage, upbraiding and debate ;  
 And by his power the desperate weapons thrown,  
 Become as safe and pleasant as his own ;  
 But left by him, their natures they assume,  
 And fatal, in their poisoning force, become.  
 Time fled, and now the swain compell'd to see  
 New cause for fear—' Is this thy thrift ?'  
 quoth he :  
 To whom the wife with cheerful voice replied :—  
 ' Thou moody man, lay all thy fears aside,  
 I've seen a vision ;—they, from whom I came,  
 A daughter promise, promise wealth and fame ;  
 Born with my features, with my arts, yet she  
 Shall patient, pliant, persevering be,  
 And in thy better ways resemble thee.  
 The fairies round shall at her birth attend,  
 The friend of all in all shall find a friend,  
 And save that one sad star that hour must gleam  
 On our fair child, how glorious were my dream !'  
 This heard the husband, and, in surly smile,  
 Aim'd at contempt, but yet he hoped the while :  
 For as, when sinking, wretched men are found  
 To catch at rushes rather than be drown'd ;  
 So on a dream our peasant placed his hope,  
 And found that rush as valid as a rope.  
 Swift fled the days, for now in hope they fled,  
 When a fair daughter bless'd the nuptial bed ;  
 Her infant-face the mother's pains beguiled,  
 She look'd so pleasing, and so softly smiled ;  
 Those smiles, those looks, with sweet sensations moved  
 The gazer's soul, and, as he look'd, he loved.  
 And now the fairies came, with gifts, to grace  
 So-mild a nature and so fair a face.

They gave, with beauty, that bewitching art,  
That holds in easy chains the human heart;  
They gave her skill to win the stubborn mind,  
To make the suffering to their sorrows blind,  
To bring on pensive looks the pleasing smile,  
And Care's stern brow of every frown beguile.

These magic favours graced the infant-  
maid,  
Whose more enlivening smile the charming  
gifts repaid.

Now Fortune changed, who, were she con-  
stant long,

Would leave us few adventures for our song.

A wicked elfin roved this land around,  
Whose joys proceeded from the griefs he  
found;

Envy his name:—his fascinating eye  
From the light bosom drew the sudden sigh;  
Unsocial he, but with malignant mind,  
He dwelt with man, that he might curse man-  
kind;

Like the first foe, he sought th' abode of Joy,  
Grieved to behold, but eager to destroy;  
Round blooming beauty, like the wasp, he  
flew,

Soil'd the fresh sweet, and changed the rosy  
hue;

The wise, the good, with anxious heart he  
saw,

And here a failing found, and there a flaw;  
Discord in families 'twas his to move,  
Distrust in friendship, jealousy in love;  
He told the poor, what joys the great pos-  
sess'd,

The great—what calm content the cottage  
bless'd;

To part the learned and the rich he tried,  
Till their slow friendship perish'd in their  
pride.

Such was the fiend, and so secure of prey,  
That only Misery pass'd unstung away.

Soon as he heard the fairy-babe was born,  
Scornful he smiled, but felt no more than  
scorn;

For why, when Fortune placed her state so  
low,

In useless spite his lofty malice show?  
Why, in a mischief of the meaner kind,  
Exhaust the vigour of a ranc'rous mind?  
But, soon as Fame the fairy-gifts proclaim'd,  
Quick-rising wrath his ready soul inflamed,  
To swear, by vows that e'en the wicked tie,  
The nymph should weep her varied destiny;

That every gift, that now appear'd to shine  
In her fair face, and make her smiles divine,  
Should all the poison of his magic prove,  
And they should scorn her, whom she sought  
for love.

His spell prepared, in form an ancient dame,  
A fiend in spirit, to the cot he came;  
There gain'd admittance, and the infant  
press'd

(Muttering his wicked magic) to his breast;  
And thus he said:—'O! all the powers who  
wait

On Jove's decrees, and do the work of fate,  
Was I alone, despised or worthless, found,  
Weak to protect, or impotent to wound?  
See then thy foe, regret the friendship lost,  
And learn my skill, but learn it at your cost.

'Know then, O child! devote to fates severe,  
The good shall hate thy name, the wise shall  
fear;

Wit shall deride, and no protecting friend  
Thy shame shall cover, or thy name defend.  
Thy gentle sex, who, more than ours, should  
spare

A humble foe, will greater scorn declare;  
The base alone thy advocates shall be,  
Or boast alliance with a wretch like thee.'

He spake and vanish'd, other prey to find,  
And waste in slow disease the conquer'd mind.

Awed by the elfin's threats, and fill'd with  
dread,

The parents wept, and sought their infant's  
bed:

Despair alone the father's soul possess'd;  
But hope rose gently in the mother's breast;  
For well she knew that neither grief nor joy  
Pain'd without hope, or pleased without alloy;  
And while these hopes and fears her heart  
divide,

A cheerful vision bade the fears subside.

She saw descending to the world below  
An ancient form, with solemn pace and slow.

'Daughter, no more be sad,' (the phantom  
cried),

'Success is seldom to the wise denied;  
In idle wishes fools supinely stay,

Be there a will and wisdom finds a way:  
Why art thou grieved? Be rather glad, that  
he

Who hates the happy, aims his darts at thee;  
But aims in vain; thy favour'd daughter  
lies,

Serenely blest, and shall to joy arise.

For, grant that curses on her name shall wait,  
(So envy wills and such the voice of fate,) Yet if that name be prudently suppress'd,  
She shall be courted, favoured, and caress'd.

'For what are names? and where agree mankind,

In those to persons or to acts assign'd?

Brave, learn'd, or wise, if some their favour-ites call,

Have they the titles or the praise from all? Not so, but others will the brave disdain

As rash, and deem the sons of wisdom vain;

The self-same mind shall scorn or kindness move,

And the same deed attract contempt and love.

'So all the powers who move the human soul,

With all the passions who the will control, Have various names—One giv'n by Truth Divine,

(As Simulation thus was fix'd for mine,) The rest by man, who now, as wisdom's, prize

My secret counsels, now as art despise;

One hour, as just, those counsels they embrace,

And spurn, the next, as pitiful and base.

'Thee, too, my child, those fools as Cunning fly,

Who on thy counsel and thy craft rely;

That worthy craft in others they condemn,

But 'tis their prudence, while conducting them.

'Be FLATTERY, then, thy happy infant's name,

Let Honour scorn her and let Wit defame;

Let all be true that Envy dooms, yet all,

Not on herself, but on her name, shall fall;

While she thy fortune and her own shall raise,

And decent Truth be call'd, and loved, as modest Praise.

'O happy child! the glorious day shall shine,

When every ear shall to thy speech incline,

Thy words alluring and thy voice divine:

The sullen pedant and the sprightly wit,

To hear thy soothing eloquence, shall sit;

And both, abjuring Flattery, will agree

That truth inspires, and they must honour thee.

'Envy himself shall to thy accents bend,

Force a faint smile and sullenly attend,

When thou shalt call him Virtue's jealous friend,

Whose bosom glow'd with generous rage to find

How fools and knaves are flatter'd by mankind.

'Thesage retired, who spends alone his days, And flies th' obstreperous voice of public

praise;—

The vain, the vulgar cry,—shall gladly meet,

And bid thee welcome to his still retreat;

Much will he wonder, how thou cam'st to find

A man to glory dead, to peace consign'd.

O Fame! he'll cry, (for he will call thee Fame,)

From thee I fly, from thee conceal my name;

But thou shalt say, Though Genius takes his flight,

He leaves behind a glorious train of light,

And hides in vain:—yet prudent he that flies

The flatterer's art, and for himself is wise.

'Yes, happy child! I mark th' approaching day,

When warring natures will confess thy sway;

When thou shalt Saturn's golden reign restore,

And vice and folly shall be known no more.

'Pride shall not then in human-kind have place,

Changed by thy skill, to Dignity and Grace;

While Shame, who now betrays the inward sense

Of secret ill, shall be thy Diffidence;

Avariceshall thenceforth prudent Forecast be,

And bloody Vengeance, Magnanimity;

The lavish tongue shall honest truths impart,

The lavish hand shall show the generous heart,

And Indiscretion be, contempt of art:

Folly and Vice shall then, no longer known,

Be, this as Virtue, that as Wisdom, shown.

'Then shall the Robber, as the Hero, rise

To seize the good that churlish law denies;

Throughout the world shall rove the generous band,

And deal the gifts of Heaven from hand to

hand.

'In thy blest days no tyrant shall be seen,

Thy gracious king shall rule contented men;

In thy blest days shall not a rebel be,

But patriots all and well approved of thee.

'Such powers are thine, that man, by thee shall wrest

The gainful secret from the cautious breast;

Nor then, with all his care, the good retain,

But yield to thee the secret and the gain.

In vain shall much experience guard the heart  
Against the charm of thy prevailing art;  
Admitted once, so soothing is thy strain,  
It comes the sweeter, when it comes again;  
And when confess'd as thine, what mind so  
strong

Forbears the pleasure it indulged so long?

'Soft'ner of every ill! of all our woes  
The balmy solace! friend of fiercest foes!  
Begin thy reign, and like the morning rise!  
Bring joy, bring beauty, to our eager eyes;  
Break on the drowsy world like opening day,  
While grace and gladness join thy flow'ry way;  
While every voice is praise, while every heart  
is gay.

From thee all prospects shall new beauties  
take,

'Tis thine to seek them and 'tis thine to make;  
On the cold fen I see thee turn thine eyes,  
Its mists recede, its chilling vapour flies;  
Th' enraptured lord th' improving ground  
surveys,

And for his Eden asks the traveller's praise,  
Which yet, unview'd of thee, a bog had been,  
Where spongy rushes hide the plashy green.

'I see thee breathing on the barren moor,  
That seems to bloom although so bleak  
before;

There, if beneath the gorse the primrose  
spring,

Or the pied daisy smile below the ling,  
They shall new charms, at thy command,  
disclose,

And none shall miss the myrtle or the rose.  
The wiry moss, that whitens all the hill,  
Shall live a beauty by thy matchless skill;  
Gale<sup>1</sup> from the bog shall yield Arabian balm,  
And the grey willow wave a golden palm.

'I see thee smiling in the pictured room,  
Now breathing beauty, now reviving bloom;  
There, each immortal name 'tis thine to give,  
To graceless forms, and bid the lumber live.  
Should'st thou coarse boors or gloomy martyrs  
see,

These shall thy Guidos, those thy Teniers be;

<sup>1</sup> *Myrica Gale*, a shrub growing in boggy and  
fenny grounds.

There shalt thou Raphael's saints and angels  
trace,

There make for Rubens and for Reynolds  
place,

And all the pride of art shall find, in her,  
disgrace.

'Delight of either sex! thy reign commence;  
With balmy sweetness soothe the weary sense,  
And to the sickening soul thy cheering aid  
dispense.

Queen of the mind! thy golden age begin;  
In mortal bosoms varnish shame and sin,  
Let all be fair without, let all be calm within.'

The Vision fled, the happy mother rose,  
Kiss'd the fair infant, smiled at all her foes,  
And FLATTERY made her name:—her reign  
began,

Her own dear sex she ruled, then vanquish'd  
man;

A smiling friend, to every class, she spoke,  
Assumed their manners, and their habits  
took;

Her, for her humble mien, the modest loved;  
Her cheerful looks the light and gay ap-  
proved;

The just beheld her, firm; the valiant, brave;  
Her mirth the free, her silence pleased the  
grave;

Zeal heard her voice, and, as he preach'd  
aloud,

Well-pleased he caught her whispers from the  
crowd,

(Those whispers, soothing-sweet to every ear,  
Which some refuse to pay, but none to hear):  
Shame fled her presence; at her gentle strain,  
Care softly smiled, and guilt forgot its pain;  
The wretched thought, the happy found her  
true,

The learn'd confess'd that she their merits  
knew;

The rich—could they a constant friend con-  
demn?

The poor believed—for who should flatter  
them?

Thus on her name though all disgrace  
attend,

In every creature she beholds a friend.

# REFLECTIONS

[1807]

Quid juvat errores, mersa iam puppe, fateri ?  
Quid lacrymae delicta iuvant commissa secutae ?

CLAUDIAN, in *Eutropium*, lib. ii. line 7.

What avails it, when shipwreck'd, that error appears ?  
Are the crimes we commit wash'd away by our tears ?

WHEN all the fiercer passions cease,  
(The glory and disgrace of youth) ;  
When the deluded soul, in peace,  
Can listen to the voice of truth ;  
When we are taught in whom to trust,  
And how to spare, to spend, to give ;  
(Our prudence kind, our pity just.)  
'Tis then we rightly learn to live.

Its weakness when the body feels,  
Nor danger in contempt defies ;  
To reason, when desire appeals,  
When, on experience, hope relies ;  
When every passing hour we prize,  
Nor rashly on our follies spend ;  
But use it, as it quickly flies,  
With sober aim to serious end ;  
When prudence bounds our utmost views,  
And bids us wrath and wrong forgive ;  
When we can calmly gain or lose,—  
'Tis then we rightly learn to live.

Yet thus, when we our way discern,  
And can upon our care depend,  
To travel safely, when we learn,  
Behold ! we're near our journey's end.  
We've trod the maze of error round,  
Long wand'ring in the winding glade ;  
And now the torch of truth is found,  
It only shows us where we stray'd :  
Light for ourselves, what is it worth,  
When we no more our way can choose ?  
For others, when we hold it forth,  
They, in their pride, the boon refuse.

By long experience taught, we now  
Can rightly judge of friends and foes,  
Can all the worth of these allow,  
And all their faults discern in those  
Relentless hatred, erring love,  
We can for sacred truth forego ;  
We can the warmest friend reprove,  
And bear to praise the fiercest foe :  
To what effect ? Our friends are gone,  
Beyond reproof, regard, or care ;  
And of our foes remains there one,  
The mild relenting thoughts to share ?

Now 'tis our boast that we can quell  
The wildest passions in their rage ;  
Can their destructive force repel,  
And their impetuous wrath assuage :  
Ah ! Virtue, dost thou arm, when now  
This bold rebellious race are fled ;  
When all these tyrants rest, and thou  
Art warring with the mighty dead ?  
Revenge, ambition, scorn, and pride,  
And strong desire and fierce disdain,  
The giant-brood, by thee defied,  
Lo ! Time's resistless strokes have slain.

Yet Time, who could that race subdue,  
(O'erpow'ring strength, appeasing rage,)  
Leaves yet a persevering crew,  
To try the failing powers of age.  
Vex'd by the constant call of these,  
Virtue awhile for conquest tries,  
But weary grown and fond of ease,  
She makes with them a compromise :  
Av'rice himself she gives to rest,  
But rules him with her strict commands ;  
Bids Pity touch his torpid breast,  
And Justice hold his eager hands.

Yet is there nothing men can do,  
When chilling Age comes creeping on ?  
Cannot we yet some good pursue ?  
Are talents buried ? genius gone ?

If passions slumber in the breast,  
If follies from the heart be fled ;  
Of laurels let us go in quest,  
And place them on the poet's head.

Yes, we'll redeem the wasted time,  
And to neglected studies flee ;  
We'll build again the lofty rhyme,  
Or live, Philosophy, with thee ;  
For reasoning clear, for flight sublime,  
Eternal fame reward shall be ;  
And to what glorious heights we'll climb,  
Th' admiring crowd shall envying see.

Begin the song ! begin the theme !—  
Alas ! and is Invention dead ?  
Dream we no more the golden dream ?  
Is Mem'ry with her treasures fled ?  
Yes, 'tis too late,—now Reason guides  
The mind, sole judge in all debate ;

And thus th' important point decides,  
For laurels, 'tis, alas ! too late.  
What is possess'd we may retain,  
But for new conquests strive in vain.

Beware then, Age, that what was won,  
In life's past labours, studies, views,  
Be lost not, now the labour's done,  
When all thy part is,—not to lose :  
When thou canst toil or gain no more,  
Destroy not what was gain'd before.

For, all that 's gain'd of all that 's good,  
When time shall his weak frame destroy,  
(Their use then rightly understood,)  
Shall man, in happier state, enjoy.  
Oh ! argument for truth divine,  
For study's cares, for virtue's strife ;  
To know th' enjoyment will be thine,  
In that renew'd, that endless life !

## SIR EUSTACE GREY

[1807]

SCENE—A MAD-HOUSE

PERSONS—VISITOR, PHYSICIAN, AND PATIENT

Veris miscens falsa.—

SENECA, in *Herc. furente*, v. 1070.

VISITOR

I'LL know no more ;—the heart is torn  
By views of wo, we cannot heal ;  
Long shall I see these things forlorn,  
And oft again their griefs shall feel,  
As each upon the mind shall steal ;  
That wan projector's mystic style,  
That plumpish idiot leering by,  
That peevish idler's ceaseless wile,  
And that poor madmen's half-form'd smile,  
While struggling for the full-drawn sigh !  
I'll know no more.

PHYSICIAN

—Yes, turn again ;

Then speed to happier scenes thy way,  
When thou hast view'd, what yet remain,  
The ruins of Sir Eustace Grey,  
The sport of madness, misery's prey :  
But he will no historian need,  
His cares, his crimes, will he display,  
And show (as one from frenzy freed)  
The proud-lost mind, the rash-done deed.  
That cell to him is Greyling Hall :—  
Approach ; he'll bid thee welcome there ;  
Will sometimes for his servant call,  
And sometimes point the vacant chair :

He can, with free and easy air,  
 Appear attentive and polite ;  
 Can veil his woes in manners fair,  
 And pity with respect excite.

## PATIENT

Who comes ?—Approach !—'tis kindly  
 done :—

My learn'd physician, and a friend,  
 Their pleasures quit, to visit one,  
 Who cannot to their ease attend,  
 Nor joys bestow, nor comforts lend,  
 As when I lived so bless'd, so well,  
 And dreamt not I must soon contend  
 With those malignant powers of hell.

## PHYSICIAN

Less warmth, Sir Eustace, or we go.—

## PATIENT

See ! I am calm as infant-love,  
 A very child, but one of wo,  
 Whom you should pity, not reprove :—  
 But men at ease, who never strove  
 With passions wild, will calmly show  
 How soon we may their ills remove,  
 And masters of their madness grow.

Some twenty years I think are gone,—  
 (Time flies, I know not how, away,)  
 The sun upon no happier shone,  
 Nor prouder man, than Eustace Grey.  
 Ask where you would, and all would say,  
 The man admired and praised of all,  
 By rich and poor, by grave and gay,  
 Was the young lord of Greyling Hall.

Yes ! I had youth and rosy health ;  
 Was nobly form'd, as man might be ;  
 For sickness then, of all my wealth,  
 I never gave a single fee :  
 The ladies fair, the maidens free,  
 Were all accustom'd then to say,  
 Who would a handsome figure see  
 Should look upon Sir Eustace Grey.

He had a frank and pleasant look,  
 A cheerful eye and accent bland ;  
 His very speech and manner spoke  
 The generous heart, the open hand ;  
 About him all was gay or grand,  
 He had the praise of great and small ;  
 He bought, improved, projected, plann'd,  
 And reign'd a prince at Greyling Hall.

My lady !—she was all we love ;  
 All praise (to speak her worth) is faint ;  
 Her manners show'd the yielding dove,  
 Her morals, the seraphic saint ;  
 She never breathed nor look'd complaint ;  
 No equal upon earth had she :—  
 Now, what is this fair thing I paint ?  
 Alas ! as all that live shall be.

There was, beside, a gallant youth,  
 And him my bosom's friend I had :—  
 Oh ! I was rich in very truth,  
 It made me proud—it made me mad !—  
 Yes, I was lost—but there was cause !—  
 Where stood my tale ?—I cannot find—  
 But I had all mankind's applause,  
 And all the smiles of womankind.

There were two cherub-things beside,  
 A gracious girl, a glorious boy ;  
 Yet more to swell my full-blown pride,  
 To varnish higher my fading joy,  
 Pleasures were ours without alloy,  
 Nay, Paradise,—till my frail Eve  
 Our bliss was tempted to destroy ;  
 Deceived and fated to deceive.

But I deserved ; for all that time,  
 When I was loved, admired, caress'd,  
 There was within, each secret crime,  
 Unfelt, uncancell'd, unconfess'd :  
 I never then my God address'd,  
 In grateful praise or humble prayer ;  
 And if His Word was not my jest !  
 (Dread thought !) it never was my care.

I doubted :—fool I was to doubt !  
 If that all-piercing eye could see,—  
 If He who looks all worlds throughout,  
 Would so minute and careful be,  
 As to perceive and punish me :—  
 With man I would be great and high,  
 But with my God so lost, that He,  
 In his large view, should pass me by.

Thus bless'd with children, friend, and wife,  
 Bless'd far beyond the vulgar lot ;  
 Of all that gladdens human life,  
 Where was the good, that I had not ?  
 But my vile heart had sinful spot,  
 And Heaven beheld its deep'ning stain ;  
 Eternal justice I forgot,  
 And mercy sought not to obtain.

Come near,—I'll softly speak the rest!—

Alas! 'tis known to all the crowd,  
Her guilty love was all confess'd;

And his, who so much truth avow'd,  
My faithless friend's.—In pleasure proud  
I sat, when these cursed tidings came;  
Their guilt, their flight was told aloud,  
And Envy smiled to hear my shame!

I call'd on Vengeance; at the word  
She came:—Can I the deed forget?  
I held the sword, th' accursed sword,  
The blood of his false heart made wet;  
And that fair victim paid her debt,  
She pined, she died, she loath'd to live;—  
I saw her dying—see her yet:

Fair fallen thing! my rage forgive!

Those cherubs still, my life to bless,  
Were left; could I my fears remove,  
Sad fears that check'd each fond caress,  
And poison'd all parental love?  
Yet that with jealous feelings strove,  
And would at last have won my will,  
Had I not, wretch! been doom'd to prove  
Th' extremes of mortal good and ill.

In youth! health! joy! in beauty's pride!  
They droop'd: as flowers when blighted bow,  
The dire infection came:—They died,  
And I was curs'd—as I am now—  
Nay, frown not, angry friend,—allow  
That I was deeply, sorely tried;  
Hear then, and you must wonder how  
I could such storms and strifes abide.

Storms!—not that clouds embattled make,  
When they afflict this earthly globe;  
But such as with their terrors shake  
Man's breast, and to the bottom probe;  
They make the hypocrite disrobe,  
They try us all, if false or true;  
For this, one devil had pow'r on Job;  
And I was long the slave of two.

#### PHYSICIAN

Peace, peace, my friend; these subjects fly;  
Collect thy thoughts—go calmly on.—

#### PATIENT

And shall I then the fact deny?  
I was,—thou know'st,—I was begone,  
Like him who fill'd the eastern throne,  
To whom the Watcher cried aloud:  
That royal wretch of Babylon,  
Who was so guilty and so proud.

Like him, with haughty, stubborn mind,  
I, in my state, my comforts sought;  
Delight and praise I hoped to find,  
In what I builded, planted, bought!  
Oh! arrogance! by misery taught—  
Soon came a voice! I felt it come;  
'Full be his cup, with evil fraught,  
Demons his guides, and death his doom!'

Then was I cast from out my state;  
Two fiends of darkness led my way;  
They waked me early, watch'd me late,  
My dread by night, my plague by day!  
Oh! I was made their sport, their play,  
Through many a stormy troubled year;  
And how they used their passive prey  
Is sad to tell:—but you shall hear.

And first, before they sent me forth,  
Through this unpitied world to run,  
They robb'd Sir Eustace of his worth,  
Lands, manors, lordships, every one;  
So was that gracious man undone,  
Was spurn'd as vile, was scorn'd as poor,  
Whom every former friend would shun,  
And menials drove from every door.

Then those ill-favour'd Ones<sup>3</sup>, whom none  
But my unhappy eyes could view,  
Led me, with wild emotion, on,  
And, with resistless terror, drew.  
Through lands we fled, o'er seas we flew,  
And halted on a boundless plain;  
Where nothing fed, nor breathed, nor grew,  
But silence ruled the still domain.

Upon that boundless plain, below,  
The setting sun's last rays were shed,  
And gave a mild and sober glow,  
Where all were still, asleep, or dead;  
Vast ruins in the midst were spread,  
Pillars and pediments sublime,  
Where the grey moss had form'd a bed,  
And clothed the crumbling spoils of  
time.

There was I fix'd, I know not how,  
Condemn'd for untold years to stay:  
Yet years were not;—one dreadful now  
Endured no change of night or day;  
The same mild evening's sleeping ray  
Shone softly-solemn and serene,  
And all that time I gazed away,  
The setting sun's sad rays were seen.



At length a moment's sleep stole on,—  
 Again came my commission'd foes;  
 Again through sea and land we're gone,  
 No peace, no respite, no repose:  
 Above the dark broad sea we rose,  
 We ran through bleak and frozen land;  
 I had no strength their strength t' oppose,  
 An infant in a giant's hand.

They placed me where those streamers play,  
 Those nimble beams of brilliant light;  
 It would the stoutest heart dismay,  
 To see, to feel, that dreadful sight:  
 So swift, so pure, so cold, so bright,  
 They pierced my frame with icy wound,  
 And all that half-year's polar night,  
 Those dancing streamers wrapp'd me round.

Slowly that darkness pass'd away,  
 When down upon the earth I fell,—  
 Some hurried sleep was mine by day;  
 But, soon as toll'd the evening bell,  
 They forced me on, where ever dwell  
 Far-distant men in cities fair,  
 Cities of whom no trav'lers tell,  
 Nor feet but mine were wanderers there.

Their watchmen stare, and stand aghast,  
 As on we hurry through the dark;  
 The watch-light blinks as we go past,  
 The watch-dog shrinks and fears to bark;  
 The watch-tower's bell sounds shrill; and,  
 hark!  
 The free wind blows—we've left the town—  
 A wide sepulchral-ground I mark,  
 And on a tombstone place me down.

What monuments of mighty dead!  
 What tombs of various kinds are found!  
 And stones erect their shadows shed  
 On humble graves, with wickers bound;  
 Some risen fresh, above the ground,  
 Some level with the native clay,  
 What sleeping millions wait the sound,  
 'Arise, ye dead, and come away!'

Alas! they stay not for that call;  
 Spare me this wo! ye demons, spare!—  
 They come! the shrouded shadows all,—  
 'Tis more than mortal brain can bear;  
 Rustling they rise, they sternly glare  
 At man upheld by vital breath;  
 Who, led by wicked fiends, should dare  
 To join the shadowy troops of death!

Yes, I have felt all man can feel,  
 Till he shall pay his nature's debt;  
 Ills that no hope has strength to heal,  
 No mind the comfort to forget:  
 Whatever cares the heart can fret,  
 The spirits wear, the temper gall,  
 Wo, want, dread, anguish, all beset  
 My sinful soul!—together all!

Those fiends upon a shaking fen  
 Fix'd me, in dark tempestuous night;  
 There never trod the foot of men,  
 There flock'd the fowl in win't'ry flight;  
 There danced the moor's deceitful light  
 Above the pool where sedges grow;  
 And when the morning-sun shone bright,  
 It shone upon a field of snow.

They hung me on a bough so small,  
 The rook could build her nest no higher;  
 They fix'd me on the trembling ball  
 That crowns the steeple's quiv'ring spire;  
 They set me where the seas retire,  
 But down with their returning tide;  
 And made me flee the mountain's fire,  
 When rolling from its burning side.

I've hung upon the ridgy steep  
 Of cliffs, and held the rambling brier;  
 I've plunged below the billowy deep,  
 Where air was sent me to respire;  
 I've been where hungry wolves retire;  
 And (to complete my woes) I've ran  
 Where Bedlam's crazy crew conspire  
 Against the life of reasoning man.

I've furl'd in storms the flapping sail,  
 By hanging from the topmast-head;  
 I've served the vilest slaves in jail,  
 And pick'd the dunghill's spoil for bread;  
 I've made the badger's hole my bed,  
 I've wander'd with a gipsy crew;  
 I've dreaded all the guilty dread,  
 And don't what they would fear to do.

On sand, where ebbs and flows the flood,  
 Midway they placed and bade me die;  
 Propp'd on my staff, I stoutly stood  
 When the swift waves came rolling by;  
 And high they rose, and still more high,  
 Till my lips drank the bitter brine;  
 I sobb'd convulsed, then cast mine eye,  
 And saw the tide's re-flowing sign.

And then, my dreams were such as nought  
 Could yield but my unhappy case ;  
 I've been of thousand devils caught,  
 And thrust into that horrid place,  
 Where reign dismay, despair, disgrace ;  
 Furies with iron fangs were there,  
 To torture that accursed race,  
 Doom'd to dismay, disgrace, despair.

Harmless I was ; yet hunted down  
 For treasons, to my soul unfit ;  
 I've been pursued through many a town,  
 For crimes that petty knaves commit ;  
 I've been adjudged t' have lost my wit,  
 Because I preach'd so loud and well ;  
 And thrown into the dungeon's pit,  
 For trampling on the pit of hell.

Such were the evils, man of sin,  
 That I was fated to sustain ;  
 And add to all, without—within,  
 A soul defiled with every stain  
 That man's reflecting mind can pain ;  
 That pride, wrong, rage, despair, can make ;  
 In fact, they'd nearly touch'd my brain,  
 And reason on her throne would shake.

But pity will the vilest seek,  
 If punish'd guilt will not repine,—  
 I heard a heavenly teacher speak,  
 And felt the SUN OF MERCY shine :  
 I hail'd the light ! the birth divine !  
 And then was seal'd among the few ;  
 Those angry fiends beheld the sign,  
 And from me in an instant flew.

Come hear how thus the charmers cry  
 To wandering sheep, the strays of sin,  
 While some the wicket-gate pass by,  
 And some will knock and enter in :  
 Full joyful 'tis a soul to win,  
 For he that winneth souls is wise ;  
 Now hark ! the holy strains begin,  
 And thus the sainted preacher cries :—

' Pilgrim, burthen'd with thy sin,  
 Come the way to Zion's gate,  
 There, till Mercy let thee in,  
 Knock and weep and watch and wait.  
 Knock !—He knows the sinner's cry :  
 Weep !—He loves the mourner's tears :  
 Watch !—for saving grace is high :  
 Wait,—till heavenly light appears.

' Hark ! it is the Bridegroom's voice ;  
 Welcome, pilgrim, to thy rest ;  
 Now within the gate rejoice,  
 Safe and seal'd and bought and bless'd !  
 Safe—from all the lures of vice,  
 Seal'd—by signs the chosen know,  
 Bought—by love and life the price,  
 Bless'd—the mighty debt to owe.

' Holy Pilgrim ! what for thee  
 In a world like this remain ?  
 From thy guarded breast shall flee  
 Fear and shame, and doubt and pain.  
 Fear—the hope of Heaven shall fly,  
 Shame—from glory's view retire,  
 Doubt—in certain rapture die,  
 Pain—in endless bliss expire.'

But though my day of grace was come,  
 Yet still my days of grief I find ;  
 The former clouds' collected gloom  
 Still sadden the reflecting mind ;  
 The soul, to evil things consign'd,  
 Will of their evil some retain ;  
 The man will seem to earth inclined,  
 And will not look erect again.

Thus, though elect, I feel it hard  
 To lose what I possess'd before,  
 To be from all my wealth debarr'd,—  
 The brave Sir Eustace is no more :  
 But old I wax and passing poor,  
 Stern, rugged men my conduct view ;  
 They chide my wish, they bar my door,  
 'Tis hard—I weep—you see I do.—

Must you, my friends, no longer stay ?  
 Thus quickly all my pleasures end ;  
 But I'll remember, when I pray,  
 My kind physician and his friend ;  
 And those sad hours, you deign to spend  
 With me, I shall requite them all ;  
 Sir Eustace for his friends shall send,  
 And thank their love at Greyling Hall.

## VISITOR

The poor Sir Eustace !—Yet his hope  
 Leads him to think of joys again ;  
 And when his earthly visions droop,  
 His views of heavenly kind remain :—  
 But whence that meek and humbled strain,  
 That spirit wounded, lost, resign'd ?  
 Would not so proud a soul disdain  
 The madness of the poorest mind ?

## PHYSICIAN

No ! for the more he swell'd with pride,  
 The more he felt misfortune's blow ;  
 Disgrace and grief he could not hide,  
 And poverty had laid him low :  
 Thus shame and sorrow working slow,  
 At length this humble spirit gave ;  
 Madness on these began to grow,  
 And bound him to his fiends a slave.

Though the wild thoughts had touch'd his  
 brain,  
 Then was he free :—So, forth he ran ;  
 To soothe or threat, alike were vain :  
 He spake of fiends ; look'd wild and  
 wan ;  
 Year after year, the hurried man  
 Obey'd those fiends from place to place ;  
 Till his religious change began  
 To form a frenzied child of grace.

For, as the fury lost its strength,  
 The mind reposed ; by slow degrees  
 Came lingering hope, and brought at length  
 To the tormented spirit, ease :  
 This slave of sin, whom fiends could  
 seize,  
 Felt or believed their power had end ;—  
 'Tis faith,' he cried, ' my bosom frees,  
 And now my SAVIOUR is my friend.'

But ah ! though time can yield relief,  
 And soften woes it cannot cure ;  
 Would we not suffer pain and grief,  
 To have our reason sound and sure ?  
 Then let us keep our bosoms pure,  
 Our fancy's favourite flights suppress ;  
 Prepare the body to endure,  
 And bend the mind to meet distress ;  
 And then HIS guardian care implore,  
 Whom demons dread and men adore.

## NOTES TO 'SIR EUSTACE GREY'

Note 1, page 90, line 46.  
*To whom the Watcher cried aloud.*  
 Prophecy of Daniel, chap. iv. 22, 23.

Note 2, page 90, line 73.  
*Then those ill-favoured Ones, &c.*  
 Vide Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part II.

Note 3, page 92, line 40.  
*And thus the sainted preacher cries.*

It has been suggested to me, that this  
 change from restlessness to repose, in the mind

of Sir Eustace, is wrought by a Methodistic  
 call ; and it is admitted to be such : a sober  
 and rational conversion could not have hap-  
 pened while the disorder of the brain con-  
 tinued : yet the verses which follow, in a dif-  
 ferent measure, are not intended to make any  
 religious persuasion appear ridiculous ; they  
 are to be supposed as the effect of memory in  
 the disordered mind of the speaker, and,  
 though evidently enthusiastic in respect to  
 language, are not meant to convey any im-  
 propriety of sentiment.

# THE HALL OF JUSTICE

[1807]

## IN TWO PARTS

### PART I

Confiteor facere hoc annos; sed et altera  
causa est,  
Anxietas animi, continuusque dolor.  
OVID, *Ex Ponto*, Lib. i, Ep. iv, vv. 7, 8.

MAGISTRATE, VAGRANT, CONSTABLE, &C.  
VAGRANT

TAKE, take away thy barbarous hand,  
And let me to thy master speak;  
Remit awhile the harsh command,  
And hear me, or my heart will break.

MAGISTRATE

Fond wretch! and what canst thou relate,  
But deeds of sorrow, shame, and sin?  
Thy crime is proved, thou know'st thy fate;  
But come, thy tale!—begin, begin!—

VAGRANT

My crime!—This sick'ning child to feed,  
I seized the food, your witness saw;  
I knew your laws forbade the deed,  
But yielded to a stronger law.

Know'st thou, to Nature's great command  
All human laws are frail and weak?  
Nay! frown not—stay his eager hand,  
And hear me, or my heart will break.

In this, th' adopted babe I hold  
With anxious fondness to my breast,  
My heart's sole comfort I behold,  
More dear than life, when life was bless'd;  
I saw her pining, fainting, cold,  
I begg'd—but vain was my request.

I saw the tempting food, and seized—  
My infant-sufferer found relief;  
And, in the pilfer'd treasure pleased,  
Smiled on my guilt, and hush'd my grief.

But I have griefs of other kind,  
Troubles and sorrows more severe;  
Give me to ease my tortured mind,  
Lend to my woes a patient ear;  
And let me—if I may not find  
A friend to help—find one to hear.

Yet nameless let me plead—my name  
Would only wake the cry of scorn;  
A child of sin, conceived in shame,  
Brought forth in wo, to misery born.

My mother dead, my father lost,  
I wander'd with a vagrant crew;  
A common care, a common cost,  
Their sorrows and their sins I knew;  
With them, by want on error forced,  
Like them, I base and guilty grew.

Few are my years, not so my crimes;  
The age, which these sad looks declare,  
Is Sorrow's work, it is not Time's,  
And I am old in shame and care.

Taught to believe the world a place  
Where every stranger was a foe,  
Train'd in the art that marks our race,  
To what new people could I go?  
Could I a better life embrace,  
Or live as virtue dictates? No!—

So through the land I wandering went,  
And little found of grief or joy;  
But lost my bosom's sweet content  
When first I loved—the Gipsy-Boy.

A sturdy youth he was and tall,  
His looks would all his soul declare;  
His piercing eyes were deep and small,  
And strongly curl'd his raven-hair.

Yes, Aaron had each manly charm,  
All in the May of youthful pride,  
He scarcely fear'd his father's arm,  
And every other arm defied.—

Of, when they grew in anger warm,  
(Whom will not love and power divide ?)  
I rose, their wrathful souls to calm,  
Not yet in sinful combat tried.

His father was our party's chief,  
And dark and dreadful was his look ;  
His presence fill'd my heart with grief,  
Although to me he kindly spoke.

With Aaron I delighted went,  
His favour was my bliss and pride ;  
In growing hope our days we spent,  
Love growing charms in either spied,  
It saw them, all which Nature lent,  
It lent them, all which she denied.

Could I the father's kindness prize,  
Or grateful looks on him bestow,  
Whom I beheld in wrath arise,  
When Aaron sunk beneath his blow ?

He drove him down with wicked hand,  
It was a dreadful sight to see ;  
Then vex'd him, till he left the land,

And told his cruel love to me ;—  
The clan were all, at his command,  
Whatever his command might be.

The night was dark, the lanes were deep,  
And one by one they took their way ;  
He bade me lay me down and sleep,  
I only wept and wish'd for day.

Accurs'd be the love he bore,  
Accurs'd was the force he used,  
So let him of his God implore  
For mercy, and be so refused !

You frown again,—to show my wrong,  
Can I in gentle language speak ?  
My woes are deep, my words are strong,—  
And hear me, or my heart will break.

## MAGISTRATE

I hear thy words, I feel thy pain ;  
Forbear awhile to speak thy woes ;  
Receive our aid, and then again  
The story of thy life disclose.

For, though seduced and led astray,  
Thou'st travell'd far and wander'd long ;  
Thy God hath seen thee all the way,  
And all the turns that led thee wrong.

## PART II

Quondam ridentes oculi, nunc fonte perenni  
Deplorant poenas nocte dieque suas.  
*Corn. Galli Eleg.*

## MAGISTRATE

COME, now again thy woes impart,  
Tell all thy sorrows, all thy sin ;  
We cannot heal the throbbing heart  
Till we discern the wounds within.

Compunction weeps our guilt away,  
The sinner's safety is his pain ;  
Such pangs for our offences pay,  
And these severer griefs are gain.

## VAGRANT

The son came back—he found us wed,  
Then dreadful was the oath he swore ;—  
His way through Blackburn Forest led,—  
His father we beheld no more.

Of all our daring clan not one  
Would on the doubtful subject dwell ;  
For all esteem'd the injured son,  
And fear'd the tale which he could tell.

But I had mightier cause for fear  
For slow and mournful round my bed  
I saw a dreadful form appear,—  
It came when I and Aaron wed.

(Yes ! we were wed, I know my crime,—  
We slept beneath the elmin tree ;  
But I was grieving all the time,  
And Aaron frown'd my tears to see.

For he not yet had felt the pain  
That rankles in a wounded breast ;  
He waked to sin, then slept again,  
Forsook his God, yet took his rest,—

But I was forced to feign delight,  
And joy in mirth and music sought,—  
And mem'ry now recalls the night,  
With such surprise and horror fraught,  
That reason felt a moment's flight,  
And left a mind to madness wrought.)

When waking, on my heaving breast  
I felt a hand as cold as death ;  
A sudden fear my voice suppress'd,  
A chilling terror stopp'd my breath.—

I seem'd—no words can utter how !  
For there my father-husband stood,—  
And thus he said :—' Will God allow,  
'The great avenger, just and good,  
A wife to break her marriage vow ?  
A son to shed his father's blood ? '

I trembled at the dismal sounds,  
But vainly strove a word to say ;  
So, pointing to his bleeding wounds,  
The threat'ning spectre stalk'd away.<sup>1</sup>

I brought a lovely daughter forth,  
His father's child, in Aaron's bed ;  
He took her from me in his wrath,  
'Where is my child ?'—' Thy child is dead.'

'Twas false—we wander'd far and wide,  
Through town and country, field and fen,  
Till Aaron, fighting, fell and died,  
And I became a wife again.

I then was young :—my husband sold  
My fancied charms for wicked price ;  
He gave me oft, for sinful gold,  
The slave, but not the friend of vice :—  
Behold me, Heaven ! my pains behold,  
And let them for my sins suffice !

The wretch who lent me thus for gain,  
Despised me when my youth was fled ;  
Then came disease, and brought me pain :—  
Come, death, and bear me to the dead !  
For though I grieve, my grief is vain,  
And fruitless all the tears I shed.

True, I was not to virtue train'd,  
Yet well I knew my deeds were ill ;  
By each offence my heart was pain'd,  
I wept, but I offended still ;  
My better thoughts my life disdain'd,  
But yet the viler led my will.

<sup>1</sup> The state of mind here described will account for a vision of this nature, without having recourse to any supernatural appearance.

My husband died, and now no more  
My smile was sought, or ask'd my hand,  
A widow'd vagrant, vile and poor,  
Beneath a vagrant's vile command.

Ceaseless I roved the country round,  
To win my bread by fraudulent arts,  
And long a poor subsistence found,  
By spreading nets for simple hearts.

Though poor, and abject, and despised,  
Their fortunes to the crowd I told ;  
I gave the young the love they prized,  
And promised wealth to bless the old ;  
Schemes for the doubtful I devised,  
And charms for the forsaken sold.

At length for arts like these confined  
In prison with a lawless crew,  
I soon perceived a kindred mind,  
And there my long-lost daughter knew :

His father's child, whom Aaron gave  
To wander with a distant clan,  
The miseries of the world to brave,  
And be the slave of vice and man.

She knew my name—we met in pain,  
Our parting pangs can I express ?  
She sail'd a convict o'er the main,  
And left an heir to her distress.

This is that heir to shame and pain,  
For whom I only could desery  
A world of trouble and disdain :  
Yet, could I bear to see her die,  
Or stretch her feeble hands in vain,  
And, weeping, beg of me supply ?

No ! though the fate thy mother knew  
Was shameful ! shameful though thy  
    race  
Have wander'd all, a lawless crew,  
Outcasts, despised in every place ;

Yet as the dark and muddy tide,  
When far from its polluted source,  
Becomes more pure, and, purified,  
Flows in a clear and happy course ;—

In thee, dear infant ! so may end  
Our shame, in thee our sorrows cease !  
And thy pure course will then extend,  
In floods of joy, o'er vales of peace.

Oh! by the GOD who loves to spare,  
 Deny me not the boon I crave;  
 Let this loved child your mercy share,  
 And let me find a peaceful grave;  
 Make her yet spotless soul your care,  
 And let my sins their portion have;  
 Her for a better fate prepare,  
 And punish whom 'twere sin to save!

## MAGISTRATE

Recall the word, renounce the thought,  
 Command thy heart and bend thy knee.  
 There is to all a pardon brought,  
 A ransom rich, assured and free;  
 'Tis full when found, 'tis found if sought,  
 Oh! seek it, till 'tis seal'd to thee.

## VAGRANT

But how my pardon shall I know?

## MAGISTRATE

By feeling dread that 'tis not sent,  
 By tears for sin that freely flow,  
 By grief, that all thy tears are spent,  
 By thoughts on that great debt we  
 owe,  
 With all the mercy GOD has lent,  
 By suffering what thou canst not show,  
 Yet showing how thine heart is rent,  
 Till thou canst feel thy bosom glow,  
 And say, 'MY SAVIOUR, I REPENT!'

## WOMAN!

[1807]

MR. LEDYARD, AS QUOTED BY M. PARKE IN  
 HIS TRAVELS INTO AFRIC.

'To a Woman I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. If I was hungry or thirsty, wet or sick, they did not hesitate, like Men, to perform a generous action: in so free and kind a manner did they contribute to my relief, that if I was dry, I drank the sweetest draught; and if hungry, I ate the coarsest morsel with a double relish.'

PLACE the white man on Afric's coast,  
 Whose swarthy sons in blood delight,  
 Who of their scorn to Europe boast,  
 And paint their very demons white:  
 There, while the sterner sex disdains  
 To soothe the woes they cannot feel,  
 Woman will strive to heal his pains,  
 And weep for those she cannot heal:  
 Hers is warm pity's sacred glow;  
 From all her stores, she bears a part,  
 And bids the spring of hope re-flow,  
 That languish'd in the fainting heart.

CR.

'What though so pale his haggard face,  
 So sunk and sad his looks,'—she cries;  
 'And far unlike our nobler race,  
 With crisped locks and rolling eyes;  
 Yet misery marks him of our kind;  
 We see him lost, alone, afraid;  
 And pangs of body, griefs in mind,  
 Pronounce him man, and ask our  
 aid.'

'Perhaps in some far-distant shore,  
 There are who in these forms delight;  
 Whose milky features please them more,  
 Than ours of jet thus burnish'd bright;  
 Of such may be his weeping wife,  
 Such children for their sire may call,  
 And if we spare his ebbing life,  
 Our kindness may preserve them  
 all.'

Thus her compassion Woman shows,  
 Beneath the line her acts are these;  
 Nor the wide waste of Lapland-snows  
 Can her warm flow of pity freeze:—

E

'From some sad land the stranger  
comes,

Where joys, like ours, are never found;  
Let's soothe him in our happy homes,  
Where freedom sits, with plenty  
crown'd.

"Tis good the fainting soul to cheer,

To see the famish'd stranger fed ;

To milk for him the mother-deer,

To smooth for him the furry bed.

The powers above our Lapland bless

With good no other people know ;

T' enlarge the joys that we possess,

By feeling those that we bestow !'

Thus in extremes of cold and heat,

Where wandering man may trace his  
kind ;

Wherever grief and want retreat,

In Woman they compassion find ;

She makes the female breast her seat,

And dictates mercy to the mind.

Man may the sterner virtues know,

Determined justice, truth severe :

But female hearts with pity glow,

And Woman holds affliction dear ;

For guiltless woes her sorrows flow,

And suffering vice compels her tear ;

'Tis hers to soothe the ills below,

And bid life's fairer views appear :

To Woman's gentle kind we owe

What comforts and delights us here ;

They its gay hopes on youth bestow,

And care they soothe and age they  
cheer.



# THE BOROUGH

[1810]

PAULO MAJORA CANAMUS.—VIRGIL, *Ecl.* iv. 1.

TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND, MARQUIS OF GRANBY;

RECORDER OF CAMBRIDGE AND SCARBOROUGH; LORD-LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS-  
ROTULORUM OF THE COUNTY OF LEICESTER; K.G. AND LL.D.

MY LORD,

THE poem, for which I have ventured to solicit your Grace's attention, was composed in a situation so near to Belvoir Castle, that the author had all the advantage to be derived from prospects extensive and beautiful, and from works of grandeur and sublimity: and though nothing of the influence arising from such situation should be discernible in these verses, either from want of adequate powers in the writer, or because his subjects do not assimilate with such views, yet would it be natural for him to indulge a wish, that he might inscribe his labours to the lord of a scene which perpetually excited his admiration, and he would plead the propriety of placing the titles of the House of Rutland at the entrance of a volume written in the Vale of Belvoir.

But, my Lord, a motive much more powerful than a sense of propriety, a grateful remembrance of benefits conferred by the noble family in which you preside, has been the great inducement for me to wish that I might be permitted to inscribe this work to your Grace: the honours of that time were to me unexpected, they were unmerited, and they were transitory: but since I am thus allowed to make public my gratitude, I am in some degree restored to the honour of that period; I have again the happiness to find myself favoured, and my exertions stimulated, by the condescension of the Duke of Rutland.

It was my fortune, in a poem which yet circulates, to write of the virtues, talents, and heroic death of Lord Robert Manners, and to bear witness to the affection of a brother whose grief was poignant, and to be soothed only by remembrance of his worth whom he so deeply deplored. In a patron thus favourably predisposed, my Lord, I might look for much lenity, and could not fear the severity of critical examination: from your Grace, who, happily, have no such impediment to justice, I must not look for the same kind of indulgence. I am assured, by those whose situation gave them opportunity for knowledge, and whose abilities and attention guarded them from error, that I must not expect my failings will escape detection from want of discernment, neither am I to fear that any merit will be undistinguished through deficiency of taste. It is from this information, my Lord, and a consciousness of much which needs forgiveness, that I entreat your Grace to read my verses, with a wish, I had almost added, with a purpose to be pleased, and to make every possible allowance for subjects not always pleasing, for manners sometimes gross, and for language too frequently incorrect.

With the fullest confidence in your Grace's ability and favour, in the accuracy of your judgment, and the lenity of your decision; with grateful remembrance of benefits received, and due consciousness of the little I could merit; with prayers that your Grace

may long enjoy the dignities of the House of Rutland, and continue to dictate improvement for the surrounding country ;—I terminate an address, in which a fear of offending your Grace has made me so cautious in my expressions, that I may justly fear to offend many of my readers, who will think that something more of animation should have

been excited by the objects I view, the benevolence I honour, and the gratitude I profess.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Grace's most obliged

and obedient, humble servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

## PREFACE

WHETHER, if I had not been encouraged by some proofs of public favour, I should have written the Poem now before the reader, is a question which I cannot positively determine; but I will venture to assert, that I should not, in that case, have committed the work to the press; I should not have allowed my own opinion of it to have led me into further disappointment, against the voice of judges impartial and indifferent, from whose sentence it had been fruitless to appeal: the success of a late publication, therefore, may be fairly assigned as the principal cause for the appearance of this.

When the ensuing Letters were so far written, that I could form an opinion of them, and when I began to conceive that they might not be unacceptable to the public, I felt myself prompted by duty, as well as interest, to put them to the press; I considered myself bound by gratitude for the favourable treatment I had already received, to show that I was not unmindful of it; and, however this might be mixed with other motives, it operated with considerable force upon my mind, acting as a stimulus to exertions naturally tardy, and to expectations easily checked.

It must nevertheless be acknowledged, that although such favourable opinion had been formed, I was not able, with the requisite impartiality, to determine the comparative value of an unpublished manuscript, and a work sent into the world. Books, like children, when established, have doubtless our parental affection and good wishes; we rejoice to hear that they are doing well, and are received and respected in good company: but it is to manuscripts in the study, as to children in the nursery, that our care, our

anxiety, and our tenderness are principally directed: they are fondled as our endearing companions; their faults are corrected with the lenity of partial love, and their good parts are exaggerated by the strength of parental imagination; nor is it easy even for the more cool and reasonable among parents, thus circumstanced, to decide upon the comparative merits of their offspring, whether they be children of the bed or issue of the brain.

But, however favourable my own opinion may have been, or may still be, I could not venture to commit so long a Poem to the press without some endeavour to obtain the more valuable opinion of less partial judges: at the same time, I am willing to confess that I have lost some portion of the timidity once so painful, and that I am encouraged to take upon myself the decision of various points, which heretofore I entreated my friends to decide. Those friends were then my council, whose opinion I was implicitly to follow; they are now advisers, whose ideas I am at liberty to reject. This will not, I hope, seem like arrogance: it would be more safe, it would be more pleasant, still to have that reliance on the judgment of others; but it cannot always be obtained; nor are they, however friendly disposed, ever ready to lend a helping hand to him whom they consider as one who ought by this time to have cast away the timidity of inexperience, and to have acquired the courage that would enable him to decide for himself.

When it is confessed that I have less assistance from my friends, and that the appearance of this work is, in a great measure, occasioned by the success of a former; some readers will, I fear, entertain the opinion that the book before them was written in haste,

and published without due examination and revision: should this opinion be formed, there will doubtless occur many faults which may appear as originating in neglect: Now, readers are, I believe, disposed to treat with more than common severity those writers who have been led into presumption by the approbation bestowed on their diffidence, and into idleness and unconcern, by the praises given to their attention. I am therefore even anxious it should be generally known that sufficient time and application were bestowed upon this work, and by this I mean that no material alteration would be effected by delay: it is true that this confession removes one plea for the errors of the book, want of time; but, in my opinion, there is not much consolation to be drawn by reasonable minds from this resource: if a work fails, it appears to be poor satisfaction when it is observed, that if the author had taken more care, the event had been less disgraceful.

When the reader enters into the Poem, he will find the author retired from view, and an imaginary personage brought forward to describe his Borough for him: to him it seemed convenient to speak in the first person: but the inhabitant of a village, in the centre of the kingdom, could not appear in the character of a residing burgess in a large sea-port; and when, with this point, was considered what relations were to be given, what manners delineated, and what situations described, no method appeared to be so convenient as that of borrowing the assistance of an ideal friend: by this means the reader is in some degree kept from view of any particular place, nor will he perhaps be so likely to determine where those persons reside, and what their connexions, who are so intimately known to this man of straw.

From the title of this Poem, some persons will, I fear, expect a political satire,—an attack upon corrupt principles in a general view, or upon the customs and manners of some particular place; of these they will find nothing satirized, nothing related. It may be that graver readers would have preferred a more historical account of so considerable a Borough—its charter, privileges, trade, public structures, and subjects of this kind; but I have an apology for the omission

of these things, in the difficulty of describing them, and in the utter repugnancy which subsists between the studies and objects of topography and poetry. What I thought I could best describe, that I attempted:—the sea, and the country in the immediate vicinity; the dwellings, and the inhabitants; some incidents and characters, with an exhibition of morals and manners, offensive perhaps to those of extremely delicate feelings, but sometimes, I hope, neither unamiable nor unaffecting: an Election indeed forms a part of one Letter, but the evil there described is one not greatly nor generally deplored, and there are probably many places of this kind where it is not felt.

From the variety of relations, characters, and descriptions which a BOROUGH affords, several were rejected which a reader might reasonably expect to have met with: in this case he is entreated to believe that these, if they occurred to the author, were considered by him as beyond his ability, as subjects which he could not treat in a manner satisfactory to himself. Possibly the admission of some will be thought to require more apology than the rejection of others: in such variety, it is to be apprehended, that almost every reader will find something not according with his ideas of propriety, or something repulsive to the tone of his feelings; nor could this be avoided but by the sacrifice of every event, opinion, and even expression, which could be thought liable to produce such effect; and this casting away so largely of our cargo, through fears of danger, though it might help us to clear it, would render our vessel of little worth when she came into port. I may likewise entertain a hope, that this very variety, which gives scope to objection and censure, will also afford a better chance for approval and satisfaction.

Of these objectionable parts many must be to me unknown; of others some opinion may be formed, and for their admission some plea may be stated.

In the first Letter is nothing which particularly calls for remark, except possibly the last line—giving a promise to the reader that he should both smile and sigh in the perusal of the following Letters. This may appear vain, and more than an author ought to promise; but let it be considered that

the character assumed is that of a friend, who gives an account of objects, persons, and events to his correspondent, and who was therefore at liberty, without any imputation of this kind, to suppose in what manner he would be affected by such descriptions.

Nothing, I trust, in the second Letter, which relates to the imitation of what are called weather-stains on buildings, will seem to any invidious or offensive. I wished to make a comparison between those minute and curious bodies which cover the surface of some edifices, and those kinds of stain which are formed of boles and ochres, and laid on with a brush. Now, as the work of time cannot be anticipated in such cases, it may be very judicious to have recourse to such expedients as will give to a recent structure the venerable appearance of antiquity; and in this case, though I might still observe the vast difference between the living varieties of nature, and the distant imitation of the artist, yet I would not forbear to make use of his dexterity, because he could not clothe my freestone with *mucor*, *lichen*, and *byssus*.

The wants and mortifications of a poor Clergyman are the subjects of one portion of the third Letter; and he being represented as a stranger in the Borough, it may be necessary to make some apology for his appearance in the Poem. Previous to a late meeting of a literary society, whose benevolent purpose is well known to the public, I was induced by a friend to compose a few verses, in which, with the general commendation of the design, should be introduced a hint that the bounty might be farther extended; these verses a gentleman did me the honour to recite at the meeting, and they were printed as an extract from the Poem, to which in fact they may be called an appendix.

I am now arrived at that part of my work, which I may expect will bring upon me some animadversion. Religion is a subject deeply interesting to the minds of many, and when these minds are weak, they are often led by a warmth of feeling into the violence of causeless resentment: I am therefore anxious that my purpose should be understood; and I wish to point out what things they are which an author may hold up to ridicule

and be blameless. In referring to the two principal divisions of enthusiastical teachers, I have denominated them, as I conceive they are generally called, *Calvinistic* and *Arminian* Methodists. The *Arminians*, though divided and perhaps subdivided, are still, when particular accuracy is not intended, considered as one body, having had, for many years, one head, who is yet held in high respect by the varying members of the present day: but the Calvinistic societies are to be looked upon rather as separate and independent congregations; and it is to one of these (unconnected, as is supposed, with any other) I more particularly allude. But while I am making use of this division, I must entreat that I may not be considered as one who takes upon him to censure the religious opinions of any society or individual: the reader will find that the spirit of the enthusiast, and not his opinions, his manners and not his creed, have engaged my attention. I have nothing to observe of the Calvinist and Arminian, considered as such; but my remarks are pointed at the enthusiast and the bigot, at their folly and their craft.

To those readers who have seen the journals of the first Methodists, or the extracts quoted from them by their opposers\* in the early times of this spiritual influenza, are sufficiently known all their leading notions and peculiarities; so that I have no need to enter into such unpleasant inquiries in this place: I have only to observe that their tenets remain the same, and have still the former effect on the minds of the converted: There is yet that imagined contention with the powers of darkness, that is at once so lamentable and so ludicrous: there is the same offensive familiarity with the Deity, with a full trust and confidence both in the immediate efficacy of their miserably delivered supplications, and in the reality of numberless small miracles wrought at their request and for their convenience: there still exists that delusion, by which some of the most common diseases of the body are regarded as proofs of the malignity of Satan contending for dominion over the soul: and there still remains the same wretched jargon, composed of scriptural language, debased by vulgar

\* *Methodists and Papists compared; Treatise on Grace*, by Bishop Warburton, &c.

expressions, which has a kind of mystic influence on the minds of the ignorant. It will be recollected that it is the abuse of those scriptural terms which I conceive to be improper: they are doubtless most significant and efficacious when used with propriety; but it is painful to the mind of a soberly devout person, when he hears every rise and fall of the animal spirits, every whim and notion of enthusiastic ignorance, expressed in the venerable language of the Apostles and Evangelists.

The success of these people is great, but not surprising: as the powers they claim are given, and come not of education, many may, and therefore do, fancy they are endowed with them; so that they who do not venture to become preachers, yet exert the minor gifts, and gain reputation for the faculty of prayer, as soon as they can address the Creator in daring flights of unpremeditated absurdity. The less indigent gain the praise of hospitality, and the more harmonious become distinguished in their choirs: curiosity is kept alive by succession of ministers, and self-love is flattered by the consideration that they are the persons at whom the world wonders; add to this, that, in many of them, pride is gratified by their consequence as new members of a sect whom their conversion pleases, and by the liberty, which as seceders they take, of speaking contemptuously of the Church and ministers, whom they have relinquished.

Of those denominated *Calvinistic Methodists*, I had principally one sect in view, or, to adopt the term of its founder, a *church*. This *church* consists of several congregations in town and country, unknown perhaps in many parts of the kingdom, but, where known, the cause of much curiosity and some amusement. To such of my readers as may judge an enthusiastic teacher and his peculiarities to be unworthy any serious attention, I would observe that there is something unusually daring in the boast of this man, who claims the authority of a messenger sent from God, and declares without hesitation that his call was immediate; that he is assisted by the sensible influence of the Spirit, and that miracles are perpetually wrought in his favour and for his convenience.

As it was and continues to be my desire

to give proof that I had advanced nothing respecting this extraordinary person, his operations or assertions, which might not be readily justified by quotations from his own writings, I had collected several of these and disposed them under certain heads; but I found that by this means a very disproportioned share of attention must be given to the subject, and after some consideration, I have determined to relinquish the design; and should any have curiosity to search whether my representation of the temper and disposition, the spirit and manners, the knowledge and capacity, of a very popular teacher be correct, he is referred to about fourscore pamphlets, whose titles will be found on the covers of the late editions of the *Bank of Faith*, itself a wonderful performance, which (according to the turn of mind in the reader) will either highly excite, or totally extinguish, curiosity. In these works will be abundantly seen, abuse and contempt of the Church of England and its ministers; vengeance and virulent denunciation against all offenders; scorn for morality and heathen virtue, with that kind of learning which the author possesses, and his peculiar style of composition. A few of the titles placed below will give some information to the reader respecting the merit and design of those performances.\*

As many of the preacher's subjects are controverted and nice questions in divinity, he has sometimes allowed himself relaxation from the severity of study, and favoured his admirers with the effects of an humbler kind of inspiration, viz. that of the Muse. It must be confessed that these flights of fancy are very humble, and have nothing of that daring and mysterious nature which the prose of the author leads us to expect. *The Dimensions of eternal Love* is a title of one of his more learned productions, with which might have been expected (as a fit companion), *The Bounds of infinite Grace*; but no such work appears, and possibly the

\* *Barbar*, in two parts; *Bond-Child*; *Cry of Little Faith*; *Satan's Lawsuit*; *Forty Stripes for Satan*; *Myrrh and Odour of Saints*; *the Naked Bow of God*; *Rule and Riddle*; *Way and Fare for Wayfaring Men*; *Utility of the Books and Excellency of the Parchments*; *Correspondence between Noctans, Aurita*, (the words so separated) and *Philomela*, &c.

author considered one attempt of this kind was sufficient to prove the extent and direction of his abilities.

Of the whole of this mass of inquiry and decision, of denunciation and instruction (could we suppose it read by intelligent persons), different opinions would probably be formed; the more indignant and severe would condemn the whole as the produce of craft and hypocrisy, while the more lenient would allow that such things might originate in the wandering imagination of a dreaming enthusiast.

None of my readers will, I trust, do me so much injustice as to suppose I have here any other motive than a vindication of what I have advanced in the verses which describe this kind of character, or that I had there any other purpose than to express (what I conceive to be) justifiable indignation against the assurance, the malignity, and (what is of more importance) the pernicious influence of such sentiments on the minds of the simple and ignorant, who, if they give credit to his relations, must be no more than tools and instruments under the control and management of one *called to be their Apostle*.

Nothing would be more easy for me, as I have observed, than to bring forward quotations such as would justify all I have advanced; but even had I room, I cannot tell whether there be not something degrading in such kind of attack: the reader might smile at those miraculous accounts, but he would consider them and the language of the author as beneath his further attention: I therefore once more refer him to those pamphlets, which will afford matter for pity and for contempt, by which some would be amused and others astonished—not without sorrow, when they reflect that thousands look up to the writer as a man literally inspired, to whose wants they administer with their substance, and to whose guidance they prostrate their spirit and understanding.

Having been so long detained by this Letter, I must not permit my desire of elucidating what may seem obscure, or of defending what is liable to misconstruction, any further to prevail over a wish for brevity, and the fear of giving an air of importance to subjects which have perhaps little in themselves.

The circumstance recorded in the fifth

Letter is a fact; although it may appear to many almost incredible, that, in this country, and but few years since, a close and successful man should be a stranger to the method of increasing money by the loan of it. The Minister of the place where the honest Fisherman resided has related to me the apprehension and suspicion he witnessed: With trembling hand and dubious look, the careful man received and surveyed the bond given to him; and, after a sigh or two of lingering mistrust, he placed it in the coffer whence he had just before taken his cash; for which, and for whose increase, he now indulged a belief, that it was indeed both promise and security.

If the Letter which treats of Inns should be found to contain nothing interesting or uncommon; if it describe things which we behold every day, and some which we do not wish to behold at any time; let it be considered that this Letter is one of the shortest, and that from a Poem whose subject was a Borough, populous and wealthy, these places of public accommodation could not, without some impropriety, be excluded.

I entertain the strongest, because the most reasonable hope, that no liberal practitioner in the Law will be offended by the notice taken of dishonourable and crafty attorneys. The increased difficulty of entering into the profession will in time render it much more free than it now is, from those who disgrace it; at present such persons remain; and it would not be difficult to give instances of neglect, ignorance, cruelty, oppression, and chicanery; nor are they by any means confined to one part of the country: quacks and impostors are indeed in every profession, as well with a licence as without one. The character and actions of *Swallow* might doubtless be contrasted by the delineation of an able and upright Solicitor; but this Letter is of sufficient length, and such persons, without question, are already known to my readers.

When I observe, under the article *Physic*, that the young and less experienced physician will write rather with a view of making himself known, than to investigate and publish some useful fact, I would not be thought to extend this remark to all the publications of such men. I could point out a work, con-

taining experiments the most judicious, and conclusions the most interesting, made by a gentleman, then young, which would have given just celebrity to a man after long practice. The observation is nevertheless generally true: many opinions have been adopted and many books written, not that the theory might be well defended, but that a young physician might be better known.

If I have in one Letter praised the good-humour of a man confessedly too inattentive to business, and, in another, if I have written somewhat sarcastically of 'the brick-floored parlour which the butcher lets;' 'be credit given to me, that in the one case I had no intention to apologize for idleness, nor any design in the other to treat with contempt the resources of the poor. The good-humour is considered as the consolation of disappointment, and the room is so mentioned because the lodger is vain. Most of my readers will perceive this; but I shall be sorry if by any I am supposed to make pleas for the vices of men, or treat their wants and infirmities with derision or with disdain.

It is probable, that really polite people, with cultivated minds and harmonious tempers, may judge my description of a Card-club conversation to be highly exaggerated, if not totally fictitious; and I acknowledge that the club must admit a particular kind of members to afford such specimens of acrimony and oburgation: yet that such language is spoken, and such manners exhibited, is most certain, chiefly among those who, being successful in life, without previous education, not very nice in their feelings, or very attentive to improprieties, sit down to game with no other view than that of adding the gain of the evening to the profits of the day; whom therefore disappointment itself makes angry, and, when caused by another, resentful and vindictive.

The Letter on Itinerant Players will to some appear too harshly written, their profligacy exaggerated, and their distresses magnified; but though the respectability of a part of these people may give us a more favourable view of the whole body; though some actors be sober, and some managers prudent; still there is vice and misery left, more than sufficient to justify my description. But if I could find only one woman who

(passing forty years on many stages, and sustaining many principal characters) laments in her unrespected old age, that there was no workhouse to which she could legally sue for admission; if I could produce only one female, seduced upon the boards, and starved in her lodging, compelled by her poverty to sing, and by her sufferings to weep, without any prospect but misery, or any consolation but death; if I could exhibit only one youth who sought refuge from parental authority in the licentious freedom of a wandering company; yet, with three such examples, I should feel myself justified in the account I have given:—but such characters and sufferings are common, and there are few of these societies which could not show members of this description. To some, indeed, the life has its satisfactions: they never expected to be free from labour, and their present kind they think is light: they have no delicate ideas of shame, and therefore duns and hisses give them no other pain than what arises from the fear of not being trusted, joined with the apprehension that they may have nothing to subsist upon except their credit.

For the Alms-House itself, its Governors and Inhabitants, I have not much to offer, in favour of the subject or of the characters. One of these, *Sir Denys Brand*, may be considered as too highly placed for an author (who seldom ventures above middle-life) to delineate; and indeed I had some idea of reserving him for another occasion, where he might have appeared with those in his own rank; but then it is most uncertain whether he would ever appear, and he has been so many years prepared for the public whenever opportunity might offer, that I have at length given him place, and though with his inferiors, yet as a ruler over them. Of these, one (*Benbow*) may be thought too low and despicable to be admitted here; but he is a Borough-character, and, however disgusting in some respects a picture may be, it will please some, and be tolerated by many, if it can boast that one merit of being a faithful likeness.

*Blaney* and *Clelia*, a male and female inhabitant of this mansion, are drawn at some length; and I may be thought to have given them attention which they do not merit.

I plead not for the originality, but for the truth of the character; and though it may not be very pleasing, it may be useful to delineate (for certain minds) these mixtures of levity and vice; people who are thus incurably vain and determinately worldly; thus devoted to enjoyment and insensible of shame, and so miserably fond of their pleasures, that they court even the remembrance with eager solicitation, by conjuring up the ghosts of departed indulgences with all the aid that memory can afford them. These characters demand some attention, because they hold out a warning to that numerous class of young people who are too lively to be discreet; to whom the purpose of life is amusement, and who are always in danger of falling into vicious habits, because they have too much activity to be quiet, and too little strength to be steady.

The characters of the Hospital-Directors were written many years since, and, so far as I was capable of judging, are drawn with *fidelity*. I mention this circumstance, that, if any reader should find a difference in the verification or expression, he will be thus enabled to account for it.

The Poor are here almost of necessity introduced, for they must be considered, in every place, as a large and interesting portion of its inhabitants. I am aware of the great difficulty of acquiring just notions on the maintenance and management of this class of our fellow-subjects, and I forbear to express any opinion of the various modes which have been discussed or adopted: of one method only I venture to give my sentiments, that of collecting the poor of a hundred into one building. This admission of a vast number of persons, of all ages and both sexes, of very different inclinations, habits, and capacities, into a society, must at a first view, I conceive, be looked upon as a cause of both vice and misery; nor does any thing which I have heard or read invalidate the opinion; happily, it is not a prevailing one, as these houses are, I believe, still confined to that part of the kingdom where they originated.

To this subject follow several Letters describing the follies and crimes of persons in lower life, with one relation of a happier and more consolatory kind. It has been a

subject of greater vexation to me than such trifle ought to be, that I could not, without destroying all appearance of arrangement, separate these melancholy narratives, and place the fallen Clerk in Office at a greater distance from the Clerk of the Parish, especially as they resembled each other in several particulars; both being tempted, seduced, and wretched. Yet are there, I conceive, considerable marks of distinction: their guilt is of different kind; nor would either have committed the offence of the other. The Clerk of the Parish could break the commandment, but he could not have been induced to have disowned an article of that creed for which he had so bravely contended, and on which he fully relied; and the upright mind of the Clerk in Office would have secured him from being guilty of wrong and robbery, though his weak and vacillating intellect could not preserve him from infidelity and profaneness. Their melancholy is nearly alike, but not its consequences. *Jachin* retained his belief, and though he hated life, he could never be induced to quit it voluntarily; but *Abel* was driven to terminate his misery in a way which the unfixeness of his religious opinions rather accelerated than retarded. I am therefore not without hope that the more observant of my readers will perceive many marks of discrimination in these characters.

The Life of *Ellen Orford*, though sufficiently burthened with error and misfortune, has in it little besides, which resembles those of the above unhappy men, and is still more unlike that of *Grimes*, in a subsequent Letter. There is in this character cheerfulness and resignation, a more uniform piety, and an immovable trust in the aid of religion: this, with the light texture of the introductory part, will, I hope, take off from that idea of sameness which the repetition of crimes and distresses is likely to create. The character of *Grimes*, his obduracy and apparent want of feeling, his gloomy kind of misanthropy, the progress of his madness, and the horrors of his imagination, I must leave to the judgment and observation of my readers. The mind here exhibited is one untouched by pity, unstung by remorse, and uncorrected by shame: yet is this hardihood of temper and spirit broken by want, disease, solitude, and disappoint-



ment; and he becomes the victim of a dis-tempered and horror-stricken fancy. It is evident, therefore, that no feeble vision, no half-visible ghost, not the momentary glance of an unbodied being, nor the half-audible voice of an invisible one, would be created by the continual workings of distress on a mind so depraved and flinty. The ruffian of Mr. Scott\* has a mind of this nature: he has no shame nor remorse: but the corrosion of hopeless want, the wasting of unabating disease, and the gloom of unvaried solitude, will have their effect on every nature; and the harder that nature is, and the longer time required to work upon it, so much the more strong and indelible is the impression. This is all the reason I am able to give, why a man of feeling so dull should yet become insane, should be of so horrible a nature.

That a Letter on Prisons should follow those narratives is unfortunate, but not to be easily avoided. I confess it is not pleasant to be detained so long by subjects so repulsive to the feelings of many, as the sufferings of mankind: but though I assuredly would have altered this arrangement, had I been able to have done it by substituting a better, yet am I not of opinion that my verses, or indeed the verses of any other person, can so represent the evils and distresses of life as to make any material impression on the mind, and much less any of injurious nature. Alas! sufferings real, evident, continually before us, have not effects very serious or lasting, even in the minds of the more reflecting and compassionate; nor indeed does it seem right that the pain caused by sympathy should serve for more than a stimulus to benevolence. If then the strength and solidity of truth placed before our eyes have effect so feeble and transitory, I need not be very apprehensive that my representations of Poor-houses and Prisons, of wants and sufferings, however faithfully taken, will excite any feelings which can be seriously lamented. It has always been held as a salutary exercise of the mind, to contemplate the evils and miseries of our nature: I am not therefore without hope, that even this gloomy subject of Imprisonment, and more especially the Dream of the condemned Highwayman, will

\* Marmion.

excite in some minds that mingled pity and abhorrence, which, while it is not unpleasant to the feelings, is useful in its operation: it ties and binds us to all mankind by sensations common to us all, and in some degree connects us, without degradation, even to the most miserable and guilty of our fellow-men.

Our concluding subject is Education; and some attempt is made to describe its various seminaries, from that of the Poor Widow, who pronounces the alphabet for infants, to seats whence the light of learning is shed abroad on the world. If, in this Letter, I describe the lives of literary men as embittered by much evil; if they be often disappointed, and sometimes unfitted for the world they improve; let it be considered that they are described as men who possess that great pleasure, the exercise of their own talents, and the delight which flows from their own exertions: they have joy in their pursuits, and glory in their acquirements of knowledge. Their victory over difficulties affords the most rational cause of triumph, and the attainment of new ideas leads to incalculable riches, such as gratify the glorious avarice of aspiring and comprehensive minds. Here then I place the reward of learning.—Our Universities produce men of the first scholastic attainments, who are heirs to large possessions, or descendants from noble families. Now, to those so favoured, talents and acquirements are, unquestionably, means of arriving at the most elevated and important situations; but these must be the lot of a few: in general, the diligence, acuteness, and perseverance of a youth at the University, have no other reward than some College honours and emoluments, which they desire to exchange, many of them for very moderate incomes in the obscurity of some distant village: so that, in stating the reward of an ardent and powerful mind to consist principally (I might have said entirely) in its own views, efforts, and excursions, I place it upon a sure foundation, though not one so elevated as the more ambitious aspire to. It is surely some encouragement to a studious man to reflect, that if he be disappointed, he cannot be without gratification; and that if he gets but a very humble portion of what the world can give, he has a continual fruition of un-

wearying enjoyment,<sup>f</sup> of which it has not power to deprive him.

Long as I have detained the reader, I take leave to add a few words on the subject of imitation, or, more plainly speaking, borrowing. In the course of a long Poem, and more especially of two long ones, it is very difficult to avoid a recurrence of the same thoughts, and of similar expressions; and, however careful I have been myself in detecting and removing these kinds of repetitions, my readers, I question not, would, if disposed to seek them, find many remaining. For these I can only plead that common excuse—they are the offences of a bad memory, and not of voluntary inattention; to which I must add the difficulty (I have already mentioned) of avoiding the error: this kind of plagiarism will therefore, I conceive, be treated with lenity: and of the more criminal kind, borrowing from others, I plead, with much confidence, ‘not guilty.’ But while I claim exemption from guilt, I do not affirm that much of sentiment and much of expression may not be detected in the vast collection of English poetry: it is sufficient for an author, that he uses not the words or ideas of another without acknowledgment, and this, and no more than this, I mean, by disclaiming debts of the kind; yet resemblances are sometimes so very striking, that it requires faith in a reader to admit they were undesigned. A line in the second Letter,

‘And monuments themselves memorials need,’

was written long before the author, in an accidental recourse to Juvenal, read—

Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata  
sepulchris.

Stat. x. l. 146.

and for this I believe the reader will readily

give me credit. But there is another apparent imitation in the life of *Blaney* (Letter xiv), a simile of so particular a kind, that its occurrence to two writers at the same time must appear as an extraordinary event; for this reason I once determined to exclude it from the relation; but, as it was truly unborrowed, and suited the place in which it stood, this seemed, on after-consideration, to be an act of cowardice, and the lines are therefore printed as they were written about two months before the very same thought (prosaically drest) appeared in a periodical work of the last summer. It is highly probable, in these cases, that both may derive the idea from a forgotten but common source; and in this way I must entreat the reader to do me justice, by accounting for other such resemblances, should any be detected.

I know not whether to some readers the placing two or three Latin quotations to a Letter may not appear pedantic and ostentatious, while both they and the English ones may be thought unnecessary. For the necessity I have not much to advance; but if they be allowable (and certainly the best writers have adopted them), then, when two or three different subjects occur, so many of these mottoes seem to be required: nor will a charge of pedantry remain, when it is considered that these things are generally taken from some books familiar to the school-boy, and the selecting them is facilitated by the use of a book of common-place: yet, with this help, the task of motto-hunting has been so unpleasant to me, that I have in various instances given up the quotation I was in pursuit of, and substituted such English verse or prose as I could find or invent for my purpose.

# THE BOROUGH

[1810]

## LETTER I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

These did the ruler of the deep ordain,  
To build proud navies, and to rule the main.

POPE'S *Homer's Iliad*, book vi, ll. 45, 46.

Such place hath Deptford, navy-building  
town,

Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of  
pitch;

Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,  
And Twick'nam such, which fairer scenes  
enrich.

POPE'S *Imitation of Spenser*, vi. 1-4.

... Et cum coelestibus undis

Aequoreae miscentur aquae: caret ignibus  
aether,

Caecaque nox premitur tenebris hiemisque  
suisque;

Discutiunt tamen has, praebentque micantia  
lumen

Fulmina: fulmineis ardescunt ignibus undae.

OVID, *Metamorph.* lib. xi, ll. 519-23.

The Difficulty of describing Town Scenery—

A Comparison with certain Views in the  
Country—The River and Quay—The  
Shipping and Business—Ship-Building—  
Sea-Boys and Port-Views—Village and  
Town Scenery again compared—Walks  
from Town—Cottage and adjoining Heath,  
&c.—House of Sunday Entertainment—  
The Sea: a Summer and Winter View—  
A Shipwreck at Night, and its Effects  
on Shore—Evening Amusements in the  
Borough—An Apology for the imperfect  
View which can be given of these Subjects.

'DESCRIBE the Borough'—though our idle  
tribe

May love description, can we so describe,  
That you shall fairly streets and buildings  
trace,

And all that gives distinction to a place?

This cannot be; yet, moved by your request,  
A part I paint—let fancy form the rest.

Cities and towns, the various haunts of  
men,

Require the pencil; they defy the pen:

Could he, who sang so well the Grecian fleet,  
So well have sung of alley, lane, or street?

Can measured lines these various buildings  
show,

The Town-Hall Turning, or the Prospect  
Row?

Can I the seats of wealth and want explore,  
And lengthen out my lays from door to door?

Then let thy fancy aid me—I repair

From this tall mansion of our last-year's  
mayor,

Till we the outskirts of the Borough reach,  
And these half-buried buildings next the  
beach;

Where hang at open doors the net and cork,  
While squalid sea-dames mend the meshy  
work;

Till comes the hour, when fishing through the  
tide,

The weary husband throws his freight aside;  
A living mass, which now demands the wife,  
Th' alternate labours of their humble life.

Can scenes like these withdraw thee from  
thy wood,

Thy upland forest or thy valley's flood?

Seek then thy garden's shrubby bound, and  
look,

As it steals by, upon the bordering brook;  
That winding streamlet, limpid, lingering,  
slow,

Where the reeds whisper when the zephyrs  
blow;

Where in the midst, upon her throne of green,  
Sits the large lily<sup>1</sup> as the water's queen;  
And makes the current, forced awhile to stay,  
Murmur and bubble as it shoots away;  
Draw then the strongest contrast to that  
stream,

And our broad river will before thee seem.

With ceaseless motion comes and goes the  
tide,

Flowing, it fills the channel vast and wide;  
Then back to sea, with strong majestic sweep  
It rolls, in ebb yet terrible and deep;

Here sampire-banks<sup>2</sup> and salt-wort<sup>3</sup> bound  
the flood,

There stakes and sea-weeds withering on the  
mud;

And higher up, a ridge of all things base,  
Which some strong tide has roll'd upon the  
place.

Thy gentle river boasts its pigmy boat,  
Urged on by pains, half grounded, half afloat ;  
While at her stern an angler takes his stand,  
And marks the fish he purposes to land ;  
From that clear space, where, in the cheerful  
ray

Of the warm sun, the scaly people play.

Far other craft our prouder river shows,  
Hoys, pinks and sloops ; brigs, brigantines  
and snows :

Nor angler we on our wide stream descry,  
But one poor dredger where his oysters lie :  
He, cold and wet, and driving with the  
tide,

Beats his weak arms against his tarry side,  
Then drains the remnant of diluted gin,  
To aid the warmth that languishes within ;  
Renewing oft his poor attempts to beat  
His tingling fingers into gathering heat.

He shall again be seen when evening comes,  
And social parties crowd their favourite  
rooms :

Where on the table pipes and papers lie,  
The steaming bowl or foaming tankard by ;  
'Tis then, with all these comforts spread  
around,

They hear the painful dredger's welcome  
sound ;

And few themselves the savoury boon deny,  
The food that feeds, the living luxury.

Yon is our quay ! those smaller hoys from  
town,

Its various wares, for country-use, bring  
down ;

Those laden waggons, in return, impart  
The country-produce to the city mart ;  
Hark ! to the clamour in that miffy road,  
Bounded and narrow'd by yon vessels' load ;  
The lumbering wealth she empties round the  
place,

Package, and parcel, hogshead, chest, and  
case :

While the loud seaman and the angry hind,  
Mingling in business, bellow to the wind.

Near these a crew amphibious, in the docks,  
Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks ;  
See ! the long keel, which soon the waves  
must hide ;

See ! the strong ribs which form the roomy  
side ;

Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,  
And planks which curve and crackle in the  
smoke.

Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far  
Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar.

Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys  
crowd,

Swim round a ship, or swing upon the shroud ;  
Or in a boat purloin'd, with paddles play,  
And grow familiar with the watery way :  
Young though they be, they feel whose sons  
they are,

They know what British seamen do and dare ;  
Proud of that fame, they raise and they enjoy  
The rustic wonder of the village-boy.

Before you bid these busy scenes adieu,  
Behold the wealth that lies in public view,  
Those far-extended heaps of coal and coke,  
Where fresh-fill'd lime-kilns breathe their  
stifling smoke.

This shall pass off, and you behold, instead,  
The night-fire gleaming on its chalky bed ;  
When from the light-house brighter beams  
will rise.

To show the shipman where the shallow lies.

Thy walks are ever pleasant ; every scene  
Is rich in beauty, lively, or serene—  
Rich—is that varied view with woods around,  
Seen from thy seat, within the shrubb'ry  
bound ;

Where shines the distant lake, and where  
appear

From ruins bolting, unmolested deer ;  
Lively—the village-green, the inn, the place,  
Where the good widow schools her infant  
race.

Shops, whence are heard the hammer and the  
saw,

And village-pleasures unreprieved by law ;  
Then how serene ! when in your favourite  
room,

Gales from your jasmines soothe the evening  
gloom ;

When from your upland paddock you look  
down,

And just perceive the smoke which hides the  
town ;

When weary peasants at the close of day  
Walk to their cots, and part upon the  
way ;

When cattle slowly cross the shallow brook,  
And shepherds pen their folds, and rest upon  
their crook.

We prune our hedges, prime our slender trees,  
 And nothing looks untutor'd and at ease ;  
 On the wide heath, or in the flow'ry vale,  
 We scent the vapours of the sea-born gale ;  
 Broad-beaten paths lead on from stile to stile,  
 And sewers from streets, the road-side banks  
 defile ;  
 Our guarded fields a sense of danger show,  
 Where garden-crops, with corn and clover  
 grow ;  
 Fences are form'd of wreck and placed around,  
 (With tenters tipp'd) a strong repulsive  
 bound ;  
 Wide and deep ditches by the gardens run,  
 And there in ambush lie the trap and gun ;  
 Or yon broad board, which guards each  
 tempting prize,  
 ' Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies.'  
 There stands a cottage with an open door,  
 Its garden undefended blooms before :  
 Her wheel is still, and overturn'd her stool,  
 While the lone widow seeks the neighb'ring  
 pool :  
 This gives us hope, all views of town to shun—  
 No ! here are tokens of the sailor-son ;  
 That old blue jacket, and that shirt of check,  
 And silken kerchief for the seaman's neck ;  
 Sea-spoils and shells from many a distant  
 shore,  
 And furry robe from frozen Labrador.  
 Our busy streets and sylvan-walks between,  
 Fen, marshes, bog and heath all intervene ;  
 Here pits of crag, with spongy, plashy base,  
 To some enrich th' uncultivated space :  
 For there are blossoms rare, and curious  
 rush,  
 The gale's rich balm, and sun-dew's crimson  
 blush,  
 Whose velvet leaf with radiant beauty dress'd,  
 Forms a gay pillow for the plover's breast.  
 Not distant far, a house commodious made,  
 (Lonely yet public stands) for Sunday-trade ;  
 Thither, for this day free, gay parties go,  
 Their tea-house walk, their tippling rendez-  
 vous ;  
 There humble couples sit in corner-bowers,  
 Or gaily ramble for th' allotted hours ;  
 Sailors and lasses from the town attend,  
 The servant-lover, the apprentice-friend ;  
 With all the idle social tribes who seek,  
 And find their humble pleasures once a  
 week.

Turn to the watery<sup>2</sup> world !—but who to  
 thee  
 (A wonder yet unview'd) shall paint—the  
 sea ?  
 Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,  
 When lull'd by zephyrs, or when roused by  
 storms,  
 Its colours changing, when from clouds and  
 sun  
 Shades after shades upon the surface run ;  
 Embrown'd and horrid now, and now serene,  
 In limpid blue, and evanescent green ;  
 And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,  
 Lift the fair sail, and cheat th' experienced  
 eye.<sup>5</sup>  
 Be it the summer-noon : a sandy space  
 The ebbing tide has left upon its place ;  
 Then just the hot and stony beach above,  
 Light twinkling streams in bright confusion  
 move ;  
 (For heated thus, the warmer air ascends,  
 And with the cooler in its fall contends)—  
 Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps  
 An equal motion ; swelling as it sleeps,  
 Then slowly sinking ; curling to the strand,  
 Faint, lazy waves o'ercreeper the ridgy sand,  
 Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,  
 And back return in silence, smooth and  
 slow.  
 Ships in the calm seem anchor'd ; for they  
 glide  
 On the still sea, urged solely by the tide ;  
 Art thou not present, this calm scene before,  
 Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,  
 And far as eye can reach, it can discern no  
 more ?  
 Yet sometimes comes a ruffling cloud to  
 make  
 The quiet surface of the ocean shake ;  
 As an awaken'd giant with a frown  
 Might show his wrath, and then to sleep sink  
 down.  
 View now the winter-storm ! above, one  
 cloud,  
 Black and unbroken, all the skies o'ershroud ;  
 Th' unwieldy porpoise through the day before  
 Had roll'd in view of boding men on shore ;  
 And sometimes hid and sometimes show'd his  
 form,  
 Dark as the cloud, and furious as the storm.  
 All where the eye delights, yet dreads to  
 roam,  
 The breaking billows cast the flying foam

Upon the billows rising—all the deep  
Is restless change; the waves so swell'd and  
steep,

Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,  
Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells:  
But nearer land you may the billows trace,  
As if contending in their watery chase;  
May watch the mightiest till the shoal they  
reach,

Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch;  
Curl'd as they come, they strike with furious  
force,

And then re-flowing, take their grating course,  
Raking the rounded flints, which ages past  
Roll'd by their rage, and shall to ages last.

Far off the petrel in the troubled way  
Swims with her brood, or flutters in the spray;  
She rises often, often drops again,  
And sports at ease on the tempestuous main.

High o'er the restless deep, above the reach  
Of gunner's hope, vast flights of wild-ducks  
stretch;

Far as the eye can glance on either side,  
In a broad space and level line they glide;  
All in their wedge-like figures from the north,  
Day after day, flight after flight, go forth.

In-shore their passage tribes of sea-gulls  
urge,

And drop for prey within the sweeping surge;  
Oft in the rough opposing blast they fly  
Far back, then turn, and all their force apply,  
While to the storm they give their weak com-  
plaining cry;

Or clap the sleek white pinion to the breast,  
And in the restless ocean dip for rest.

Darkness begins to reign; the louder wind  
Appals the weak and awes the firmer mind;  
But frights not him, whom evening and the  
spray

In part conceal—yon prowler on his way:  
Lo! he has something seen; he runs apace,  
As if he fear'd companion in the chase;  
He sees his prize, and now he turns again,  
Slowly and sorrowing—'Was your search in  
vain?'

Gruffly he answers, 'Tis a sorry sight!  
A seaman's body: there'll be more to-night!'

Hark! to those sounds! they're from  
distress at sea:

How quick they come! What terrors may  
there be!

Yes, 'tis a driven vessel: I discern  
Lights, signs of terror, gleaming from the stern;

Others behold them too, and from the town  
In various parties seamen hurry down;  
Their wives pursue, and damsels urged by  
dread,

Lest men so dear be into danger led;  
Their head the gown has hooded, and their  
call

In this sad night is piercing like the squall;  
They feel their kinds of power, and when they  
meet,

Chide, fondle, weep, dare, threaten, or entreat.

See one poor girl, all terror and alarm,  
Has fondly seized upon her lover's arm;  
'Thou shalt not venture;' and he answers  
'No!

I will not!'—still she cries, 'Thou shalt not go.'  
No need of this; not here the stoutest boat  
Can through such breakers, o'er such billows  
float;

Yet may they view these lights upon the beach,  
Which yield them hope, whom help can never  
reach.

From parted clouds the moon her radiance  
throws

On the wild waves, and all the danger shows;  
But shows them beaming in her shining vest,  
Terrific splendour! gloom in glory dress'd!  
This for a moment, and then clouds again  
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign.

But hear we now those sounds? Do lights  
appear?

I see them not! the storm alone I hear:  
And lo! the sailors homeward take their way;  
Man must endure—let us submit and pray.

Such are our winter-views; but night  
comes on—

Now business sleeps, and daily cares are gone;  
Now parties form, and some their friends assist  
To waste the idle hours at sober whist;  
The tavern's pleasure or the concert's charm  
Unnumber'd moments of their sting disarm;  
Play-bills and open doors a crowd invite,  
To pass off one dread portion of the night;  
And show and song and luxury combined,  
Lift off from man this burthen of mankind.

Others advent'rous walk abroad and meet  
Returning parties pacing through the street;  
When various voices, in the dying day,  
Hum in our walks, and greet us in our way;  
When tavern-lights flit on from room to room,  
And guide the tippling sailor staggering home:  
There as we pass, the jingling bells betray  
How business rises with the closing day:

Now walking silent, by the river's side,  
The ear perceives the rippling of the tide ;  
Or measured cadence of the lads who tow  
Some enter'd hoy, to fix her in her row ;  
Or hollow sound, which from the parish-bell  
To some departed spirit bids farewell !

Thus shall you something of our BOROUGH  
know,  
Far as a verse, with Fancy's aid, can show ;

Of sea or river, of a quay or street,  
The best description must be incomplete ;  
But when a happier theme succeeds, and  
when

Men are our subjects and the deeds of men ;  
Then may we find the Muse in happier  
style,

And we may sometimes sigh and sometimes  
smile.

## LETTER II. THE CHURCH

... Festinat enim decurrere velox  
Flosculus angustae miseraeque brevissima  
vitae  
Portio ; dum bibimus, dum sarta, unguenta,  
puellas  
Poscimus, obrepat non intellecta senectus.

JUVENAL, *Sat.* ix. ll. 126-9.

And when at last thy love shall die,  
Wilt thou receive his parting breath ?  
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,  
And cheer with smiles the bed of death ?  
PERCY.

Several Meanings of the word *Church*—The Building so called, here intended—Its Antiquity and Grandeur—Columns and Ailes—The Tower : the Stains made by Time compared with the mock Antiquity of the Artist—Progress of Vegetation on such Buildings—Bells—Tombs : one in decay—Mural Monuments, and the Nature of their Inscriptions—An Instance in a departed Burgess—Churchyard Graves—Mourners for the Dead—A Story of a betrothed Pair in humble Life, and Effects of Grief in the Survivor.

'What is a Church ?'—Let Truth and Reason speak,

They would reply, 'The faithful, pure, and meek ;

From Christian folds, the one selected race,  
Of all professions, and in every place.'

'What is a Church ?'—'A flock,' our vicar cries,

'Whom bishops govern and whom priests advise ;

Wherein are various states and due degrees,  
The bench for honour, and the stall for ease ;

That ease be mine, which, after all his cares,  
The pious, peaceful prebendary shares.'

'What is a Church ?'—Our honest sexton tells,

'Tis a tall building, with a tower and bells ;  
Where priest and clerk with joint exertion strive

To keep the ardour of their flock alive ;  
That, by his periods eloquent and grave ;  
This, by responses, and a well-set stave :  
These for the living ; but when life be fled,  
I toll myself the requiem for the dead.'

'Tis to this Church I call thee, and that place

Where slept our fathers when they'd run their race :

We too shall rest, and then our children keep  
Their road in life, and then, forgotten, sleep ;  
Meanwhile the building slowly falls away,  
And, like the builders, will in time decay.

The old foundation—but it is not clear  
When it was laid—you care not for the year ;  
On this, as parts decay'd by time and storms,  
Arose these various disproportion'd forms ;  
Yet Gothic, all the learn'd who visit us  
(And our small wonders) have decided thus :  
'Yon noble Gothic arch,' 'That Gothic door ;'  
So have they said ; of proof you'll need no more.

Here large plain columns rise in solemn style,  
You'd love the gloom they make in either aisle ;  
When the sun's rays, enfeebled as they pass  
(And short of splendour) through the storied glass,

Faintly displays the figures on the floor,  
Which pleased distinctly in their place before.

But ere you enter, yon bold tower survey,  
Tall and entire, and venerably gray,  
For time has soften'd what was harsh when new,

And now the stains are all of sober hue ;

The living stains which Nature's hand alone,  
 Profuse of life, pours forth upon the stone;  
 For ever growing; where the common eye  
 Can but the bare and rocky bed descrie:  
 There Science loves to trace her tribes minute,  
 The juiceless foliage, and the tasteless fruit;  
 There she perceives them round the surface  
 creep,

And while they meet, their due distinction  
 keep;

Mix'd but not blended; each its name retains,  
 And these are Nature's ever-during stains.

And wouldst thou, artist! with thy tints  
 and brush,

Form shades like these? Pretender, where  
 thy blush?

In three short hours shall thy presuming hand  
 Th' effect of three slow centuries command? <sup>1</sup>

Thou may'st thy various greens and grays  
 contrive,

They are not lichens, nor like aught alive;—  
 But yet proceed, and when thy tints are lost,  
 Fled in the shower, or crumbled by the frost;

When all thy work is done away as clean  
 As if thou never spread'st thy gray and green;

Then may'st thou see how Nature's work is  
 done,

How slowly true she lays her colours on;  
 When her least speck upon the hardest flint  
 Has mark and form and is a living tint;  
 And so embodied with the rock, that few  
 Can the small germ upon the substance view. <sup>2</sup>

Seeds, to our eye invisible, will find  
 On the rude rock the bed that fits their kind;  
 There, in the rugged soil, they safely dwell,  
 Till showers and snows the subtle atoms swell,  
 And spread th' enduring foliage;—then we  
 trace

The freckled flower upon the flinty base;  
 These all increase, till in unnoticed years  
 The stony tower as gray with age appears;  
 With coats of vegetation, thinly spread,  
 Coat above coat, the living on the dead:

These then dissolve to dust, and make a way  
 For bolder foliage, nursed by their decay:  
 The long-enduring ferns in time will all  
 Die and depose their dust upon the wall;  
 Where the wing'd seed may rest, till many  
 a flower

Show Flora's triumph o'er the falling tower.

But ours yet stands, and has its bells  
 renown'd

For size magnificent and solemn sound;

Each has its motto: some contrived to tell,  
 In monkish rhyme, the uses of a bell <sup>3</sup>;  
 Such wond'rous good, as few conceive could  
 spring

From ten loud coppers when their clappers  
 swing.

Enter'd the Church; we to a tomb proceed,  
 Whose names and titles few attempt to read;  
 Old English letters, and those half pick'd out,  
 Leave us, unskilful readers, much in doubt;  
 Our sons shall see its more degraded state;  
 The tomb of grandeur hastens to its fate;  
 That marble arch, our sexton's favourite  
 show,

With all those ruff'd and painted pairs below;  
 The noble lady and the lord who rest

Supine, as courtly dame and warrior dress'd;  
 All are departed from their state sublime,

Mangled and wounded in their war with time  
 Colleagu'd with mischief; here a leg is fled,

And lo! the baron with but half a head;  
 Midway is cleft the arch; the very base

Is batter'd round and shifted from its place.

Wonder not, mortal, at thy quick decay—  
 See! men of marble piece-meal melt away;

When whose the image we no longer read,  
 But monuments themselves memorials need. <sup>4</sup>

With few such stately proofs of grief or  
 pride

By wealth erected, is our Church supplied;  
 But we have mural tablets, every size,

That we could wish, or vanity devise.

Death levels man,—the wicked and the just,  
 The wise, the weak, lie blended in the dust;

And by the honours dealt to every name,  
 The king of terrors seems to level fame.

—See! here lamented wives, and every wife  
 The pride and comfort of her husband's life;

Here, to her spouse, with every virtue graced,  
 His mournful widow has a trophy placed;

And here 'tis doubtful if the duteous son,  
 Or the good father, be in praise outdone.

This may be nature; when our friends we  
 lose,

Our alter'd feelings alter too our views;  
 What in their tempers teased us or distress'd,

Is, with our anger and the dead, at rest;  
 And much we grieve, no longer trial made,

For that impatience which we then display'd;  
 Now to their love and worth of every kind

A soft compunction turns th' afflicted mind;  
 Virtues neglected then, adored become,

And graces slighted, blossom on the tomb.



'Tis well ; but let not love nor grief believe  
That we assent (who neither loved nor grieve)  
To all that praise which on the tomb is read,  
To all that passion dictates for the dead ;  
But more indignant, we the tomb deride,  
Whose bold inscription flattery sells to pride.

Read of this Burgess—on the stone appear  
How worthy he ! how virtuous ! and how  
dear !

What wailing was there when his spirit fled,  
How mourn'd his lady for her lord when dead,  
And tears abundant through the town were  
shed ;

See ! he was liberal, kind, religious, wise,  
And free from all disgrace and all disguise ;  
His sterling worth, which words cannot ex-  
press,

Lives with his friends, their pride and their  
distress.

All this of Jacob Holmes ? for his the name ;  
He thus kind, liberal, just, religious ?—shame !  
What is the truth ? Old Jacob married thrice ;  
He dealt in coals, and av'rice was his vice ;  
He ruled the Borough when his year came on,  
And some forget, and some are glad he's gone ;  
For never yet with shilling could he part,  
But when it left his hand, it struck his heart.

Yet, here will love its last attentions pay,  
And place memorials on these beds of clay.  
Large level stones lie flat upon the grave,  
And half a century's sun and tempest brave ;  
But many an honest tear and heartfelt sigh  
Have follow'd those who now unnoticed lie ;  
Of these what numbers rest on every side !  
Without one token left by grief or pride ;  
Their graves soon levell'd to the earth, and  
then

Will other hillocks rise o'er other men ;  
Daily the dead on the decay'd are thrust,  
And generations follow, ' dust to dust.'

Yes ! there are real mourners—I have seen  
A fair, sad girl, mild, suffering, and serene ;  
Attention (through the day) her duties claim'd,  
And to be useful as resign'd she aim'd ;  
Neatly she dress'd, nor vainly seem'd t' expect  
Pity for grief, or pardon for neglect ;  
But when her wearied parents sunk to sleep,  
She sought her place to meditate and weep :  
Then to her mind was all the past display'd,  
That faithful memory brings to sorrow's aid :  
For then she thought on one regretted  
youth,

Her tender trust, and his unquestion'd truth ;

In ev'ry place she wander'd, where they'd  
been,

And sadly-sacred held the parting-scene ;  
Where last for sea he took his leave—that  
place

With double interest would she nightly trace ;  
For long the courtship was, and he would  
say,

Each time he sail'd,—' This once, and then  
the day : '

Yet prudence tarried, but when last he went,  
He drew from pitying love a full consent.

Happy he sail'd, and great the care she  
took,

That he should softly sleep, and smartly look ;  
White was his better linen, and his check  
Was made more trim than any on the deck ;

And every comfort men at sea can know  
Was hers to buy, to make, and to bestow :  
For he to Greenland sail'd, and much she told,  
How he should guard against the climate's  
cold ;

Yet saw not danger ; dangers he'd withstood,  
Nor could she trace the fever in his blood :  
His messmates smiled at flushings in his  
cheek,

And he too smiled, but seldom would he  
speak ;

For now he found the danger, felt the pain,  
With grievous symptoms he could not ex-  
plain ;

Hope was awaken'd, as for home he sail'd,  
But quickly sank, and never more prevail'd.

He call'd his friend, and prefaced with  
a sigh

A lover's message—' Thomas, I must die :  
Would I could see my Sally, and could rest  
My throbbing temples on her faithful breast,  
And gazing go !—if not, this trifle take,  
And say, till death I wore it for her sake ;  
Yes ! I must die—blow on, sweet breeze,  
blow on !

Give me one look, before my life be gone,  
Oh ! give me that, and let me not despair,  
One last fond look—and now repeat the  
prayer.'

He had his wish, had more ; I will not  
paint

The lovers' meeting : she beheld him faint,—  
With tender fears, she took a nearer view,  
Her terrors doubling as her hopes withdrew ;  
He tried to smile, and, half succeeding, said,  
' Yes ! I must die ; ' and hope for ever fled.

Still long she nursed him : tender thoughts  
meantime  
Were interchanged, and hopes and views  
sublime.

To her he came to die, and every day  
She took some portion of the dread away ;  
With him she pray'd, to him his Bible read,  
Soothed the faint heart, and held the aching  
head :

She came with smiles the hour of pain to  
cheer ;

Apart she sigh'd ; alone, she shed the tear ;  
Then, as if breaking from a cloud, she gave  
Fresh light, and guilt the prospect of the grave.

One day he lighter seem'd, and they forgot  
The care, the dread, the anguish of their lot ;  
They spoke with cheerfulness, and seem'd to  
think,

Yet said not so—' Perhaps he will not sink : '  
A sudden brightness in his look appear'd,  
A sudden vigour in his voice was heard ;—  
She had been reading in the Book of Prayer,  
And led him forth, and placed him in his chair ;  
Lively he seem'd, and spoke of all he knew,  
The friendly many, and the favourite few ;  
Nor one that day did he to mind recall  
But she has treasured, and she loves them all ;  
When in her way she meets them, they appear  
Peculiar people—death has made them dear.  
He named his friend, but then his hand she  
press'd,

And fondly whisper'd, ' Thou must go to  
rest ; '

' I go,' he said ; but as he spoke, she found  
His hand more cold, and fluttering was the  
sound !

Then gazed affrighten'd ; but she caught  
a last,

A dying look of love,—and all was past !

She placed a decent stone his grave above,  
Neatly engraved—an offering of her love ;  
For that she wrought, for that forsook her  
bed,

Awake alike to duty and the dead ;  
She would have grieved, had friends presumed  
to spare

The least assistance—'twas her proper care.

Here will she come, and on the grave will  
sit,

Folding her arms, in long abstracted fit ;  
But if observer pass, will take her round,  
And careless seem, for she would not be  
found,

Then go again, and thus her hour employ,  
While visions please her, and while woes  
destroy.

Forbear, sweet maid ! nor be by fancy led,  
To hold mysterious converse with the dead ;  
For sure at length thy thoughts, thy spirits  
pain,

In this sad conflict will disturb thy brain ;  
All have their tasks and trials ; thine are  
hard,

But short the time and glorious the reward ;  
Thy patient spirit to thy duties give,  
Regard the dead, but to the living live.<sup>5</sup>

### LETTER III. THE VICAR—THE CURATE, ETC.

And telling me the sov'reign'st thing on earth  
Was parmacety for an inward bruise.

SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV*, Part I, Act i,  
Scene 3.

So gentle, yet so brisk, so wond'rous sweet,  
So fit to prattle at a lady's feet.

CHURCHILL, *The Author*, 359, 360.

Much are the precious hours of youth mispent  
In climbing learning's rugged, steep ascent :  
When to the top the bold adventurer's got,  
He reigns vain monarch o'er a barren spot ;  
Whilst in the vale of ignorance below,  
Folly and vice to rank luxuriance grow ;

Honours and wealth pour in on every side,  
And proud preferment rolls her golden tide.  
CHURCHILL, *The Author*, 5-12.

#### VICAR

The late departed Minister of the Borough—  
His soothing and supplicatory Manners—  
His cool and timid Affections—No Praise  
due to such negative Virtue—Address to  
Characters of this Kind—The Vicar's Em-  
ployments—His Talents and moderate  
Ambition—His Dislike of Innovation—His  
mild but ineffectual Benevolence—A Sum-  
mary of his Character.

## CURATE

Mode of paying the Borough-Minister—The Curate has no such Resources—His Learning and Poverty—Erroneous Idea of his Parent—His Feelings as a Husband and Father—The dutiful Regard of his numerous Family—His Pleasure as a Writer, how interrupted—No Resource in the Press—Vulgar Insult—His Account of a Literary Society, and a Fund for the Relief of indigent Authors, &c.

## THE VICAR

WHERE ends our chancel in a vaulted space,  
Sleep the departed vicars of the place;  
Of most, all mention, memory, thought are past—

But take a slight memorial of the last.

To what famed college we our Vicar owe,  
To what fair county, let historians show:  
Few now remember when the mild young man,  
Ruddy and fair, his Sunday-task began;  
Few live to speak of that soft soothing look  
He cast around, as he prepared his book;  
It was a kind of supplicating smile,  
But nothing hopeless of applause, the while;  
And when he finish'd, his corrected pride  
Felt the desert, and yet the praise denied.  
Thus he his race began, and to the end  
His constant care was, no man to offend;  
No haughty virtues stirr'd his peaceful mind,  
Nor urged the priest to leave the flock behind;  
He was his Master's soldier, but not one  
To lead an army of his martyrs on:  
Fear was his ruling passion; yet was love,  
Of timid kind, once known his heart to move;  
It led his patient spirit where it paid  
Its languid offerings to a listening maid;  
She, with her widow'd mother, heard him speak,

And sought awhile to find what he would seek:  
Smiling he came, he smiled when he withdrew,  
And paid the same attention to the two;  
Meeting and parting without joy or pain,  
He seem'd to come that he might go again.  
The wondering girl, no prude, but something nice,

At length was chill'd by his unmelting ice;  
She found her tortoise held such sluggish pace,  
That she must turn and meet him in the chase:  
This not approving, she withdrew till one  
Came who appear'd with livelier hope to run;  
Who sought a readier way the heart to move,  
Than by faint dalliance of unfixing love.

Accuse me not that I approving paint  
Impatient hope or love without restraint;  
Or think the passions, a tumultuous throng,  
Strong as they are, ungovernably strong:  
But is the laurel to the soldier due,  
Who cautious comes not into danger's view?  
What worth has virtue by desire untried,  
When Nature's self enlists on duty's side?

The married dame in vain assail'd the truth  
And guarded bosom of the Hebrew-youth;  
But with the daughter of the Priest of On  
The love was lawful, and the guard was gone;  
But Joseph's fame had lessen'd in our view,  
Had he, refusing, fled the maiden too.

Yet our good priest to Joseph's praise  
aspired,

As once rejecting what his heart desired;  
'I am escaped,' he said, when none pursued;  
When none attacked him, 'I am unsubdued';

'Oh pleasing pangs of love,' he sang again,  
Cold to the joy, and stranger to the pain.  
Ev'n in his age would he address the young,  
'I too have felt these fires, and they are strong';

But from the time he left his favourite maid,  
To ancient females his devoirs were paid;  
And still they miss him after morning prayer;  
Nor yet successor fills the Vicar's chair,  
Where kindred spirits in his praise agree,  
A happy few, as mild and cool as he;  
The easy followers in the female train,  
Led without love, and captives without chain.

Ye lilies male! think (as your tea you sip,  
While the town small-talk flows from lip to lip;

Intrigues half-gather'd, conversation-scrap,  
Kitchen-capsals, and nursery-mishaps.)  
If the vast world may not some scene produce,  
Some state where your small talents might have use;

Within seraglios you might harmless move,  
'Mid ranks o' beauty, and in haunts of love;  
There from too daring man the treasures guard,

An easy duty, and its own reward;  
Nature's soft substitutes, you there might save

From crime the tyrant, and from wrong the slave.

But let applause be dealt in all we may,  
Our priest was cheerful, and in season gay;

His frequent visits seldom fail'd to please ;  
Easy himself, he sought his neighbour's ease :  
To a small garden with delight he came,  
And gave successive flowers a summer's fame ;  
These he presented with a grace his own  
To his fair friends, and made their beauties  
known,

Not without moral compliment ; how they  
' Like flowers were sweet, and must like  
flowers decay.'

Simple he was, and loved the simple truth,  
Yet had some useful cunning from his youth ;  
A cunning never to dishonour lent,  
And rather for defence than conquest meant ;  
'Twas fear of power, with some desire to rise,  
But not enough to make him enemies ;  
He ever aim'd to please ; and to offend  
Was ever cautious ; for he sought a friend ;  
Yet for the friendship never much would pay,  
Content to bow, be silent, and obey,  
And by a soothing suff'rance find his way.

Fiddling and fishing were his arts : at times  
He alter'd sermons, and he aim'd at rhymes ;  
And his fair friends, not yet intent on cards,  
Oft he amused with riddles and charades.

Mild were his doctrines, and not one dis-  
course

But gain'd in softness what it lost in force :  
Kind his opinions ; he would not receive  
An ill report, nor evil act believe ;  
' If true, 'twas wrong ; but blemish great or  
small

Have all mankind ; yea, sinners are we all.'

If ever fretful thought disturb'd his breast,  
If aught of gloom that cheerful mind op-  
press'd,

It sprang from innovation ; it was then  
He spake of mischief made by restless men ;  
Not by new doctrines : never in his life  
Would he attend to controversial strife ;  
For sects he cared not ; ' They are not of us,  
Nor need we, brethren, their concerns discuss ;  
But 'tis the change, the schism at home I feel ;  
Ills few perceive, and none have skill to heal ;  
Not at the altar our young brethren read  
(Facing their flock) the decalogue and creed ;  
But at their duty, in their desks they stand,  
With naked surplice, lacking hood and band :  
Churches are now of holy song bereft,  
And half our ancient customs changed or  
left ;

Few sprigs of ivy are at Christmas seen,  
Nor crimson berry tips the holly's green ;

Mistaken choirs refuse the solemn strain  
Of ancient Sternhold, which from ours amain  
Comes flying forth from aile to aile about,  
Sweet links of harmony and long drawn out.'

These were to him essentials ; all things new  
He deem'd superfluous, useless, or untrue ;  
To all beside indifferent, easy, cold,  
Here the fire kindled, and the wo was told.

Habit with him was all the test of truth,  
' It must be right : I've done it from my  
youth.'

Questions he answer'd in as brief a way,  
' It must be wrong—it was of yesterday.'

Though mild benevolence our priest  
possess'd,

'Twas but by wishes or by words express'd :  
Circles in water, as they wider flow,  
The less conspicuous in their progress grow ;  
And when at last they touch upon the shore,  
Distinction ceases, and they're view'd no  
more.

His love, like that last circle, all embraced,  
But with effect that never could be traced.

Now rests our Vicar. They who knew him  
best,

Proclaim his life t' have been entirely rest ;  
Free from all evils which disturb his mind,  
Whom studies vex and controversies blind

The rich approved,—of them in awe he  
stood ;

The poor admired,—they all believed him  
good ;

The old and serious of his habits spoke ;  
The frank and youthful loved his pleasant  
joke ;

Mothers approved a safe contented guest,  
And daughters one who back'd each small  
request :

In him his flock found nothing to condemn ;  
Him sectaries liked,—he never troubled them ;  
No trifles fail'd his yielding mind to please,  
And all his passions sunk in early ease ;  
Nor one so old has left this world of sin,  
More like the being that he enter'd in.

### THE CURATE

Ask you what lands our pastor tithes ?—Alas !  
But few our acres, and but short our grass :  
In some fat pastures of the rich, indeed,  
May roll the single cow or favourite steed ;  
Who, stable-fed, is here for pleasure seen,  
His sleek sides bathing in the dewy green :

But these, our hilly heath and common wide  
Yield a slight portion for the parish-guide;  
No crops luxuriant in our borders stand,  
For here we plough the ocean, not the land;  
Still reason wills that we our pastor pay,  
And custom does it on a certain day:  
Much is the duty, small the legal due,  
And this with grateful minds we keep in view;  
Each makes his off'ring, some by habit led,  
Some by the thought, that all men must be fed;  
Duty and love, and piety and pride,  
Have each their force, and for the priest  
provide.

Not thus our Curate, one whom all believe  
Pious and just, and for whose fate they grieve;  
All see him poor, but ev'n the vulgar know  
He merits love, and their respect bestow.  
A man so learn'd you shall but seldom see,  
Nor one so honour'd, so aggrieved as he;—  
Not grieved by years alone; though his appear  
Dark and more dark; severer on severe:  
Not in his need,—and yet we all must grant  
How painful 'tis for feeling age to want:  
Nor in his body's sufferings; yet we know  
Where time has plough'd, there misery loves  
to sow;

But in the wearied mind, that all in vain  
Wars with distress, and struggles with its pain.

His father saw his powers—'I'll give,'  
quoth he,

'My first-born learning; 'twill a portion be:  
Unhappy gift! a portion for a son!

But all he had:—he learn'd, and was undone!

Better, apprenticed to an humble trade,  
Had he the cassock for the priesthood made,  
Or thrown the shuttle, or the saddle shaped,  
And all these pangs of feeling souls escaped.

He once had hope—hope ardent, lively, light;  
His feelings pleasant, and his prospects bright:  
Eager of fame, he read, he thought, he wrote,  
Weigh'd the Greek page, and added note on  
note;

At morn, at evening at his work was he,  
And dream'd what his Euripides would be.

Then care began;—he loved, he woo'd, he  
wed;

Hope cheer'd him still, and Hymen bless'd  
his bed—

A Curate's bed! then came the woful years;  
The husband's terrors, and the father's tears;  
A wife grown feeble, mourning, pining, vex'd,  
With wants and woes—by daily cares  
perplex'd;

No more a help, a smiling, soothing aid,  
But boding, drooping, sickly, and afraid.

A kind physician, and without a fee,  
Gave his opinion—'Send her to the sea.'  
'Alas!' the good man answer'd, 'can I send  
A friendless woman? Can I find a friend?  
No; I must with her, in her need, repair  
To that new place; the poor lie everywhere;—  
Some priest will pay me for my pious pains:—  
He said, he came, and here he yet remains.

Behold his dwelling; this poor hut he hires,  
Where he from view, though not from want,  
retires;

Where four fair daughters, and five sorrowing  
sons,

Partake his sufferings, and dismiss his duns;  
All join their efforts, and in patience learn  
To want the comforts they aspire to earn;  
For the sick mother something they'd obtain,  
To soothe her grief and mitigate her pain;  
For the sad father something they'd procure,  
To ease the burthen they themselves endure.

Virtues like these at once delight and press  
On the fond father with a proud distress;  
On all around he looks with care and love,  
Grieved to behold, but happy to approve.

Then from his care, his love, his grief he  
steals,

And by himself an author's pleasure feels;  
Each line detains him; he omits not one,  
And all the sorrows of his state are gone.—  
Alas! ev'n then, in that delicious hour,  
He feels his fortune, and laments its power.

Some tradesman's bill his wandering eyes  
engage,

Some scrawl for payment thrust 'twixt page  
and page;

Some bold, loud rapping at his humble  
doors,

Some surly message he has heard before,  
Awake, alarm, and tell him he is poor.

An angry dealer, vulgar, rich, and proud,  
Thinks of his bill, and passing, raps aloud;  
The elder daughter meekly makes him way—  
'I want my money, and I cannot stay:  
My mill is stopp'd; what, Miss! I cannot  
grind;

Go tell your father he must raise the wind:'  
Still trembling, troubled, the dejected maid  
Says, 'Sir, my father!—' and then stops  
afraid:

Ev'n his hard heart is soften'd, and he hears  
Her voice with pity; he respects her tears;

His stubborn features half admit a smile,  
And his tone softens—' Well! I'll wait awhile.'

Pity! a man so good, so mild, so meek,  
At such an age, should have his bread to seek;  
And all those rude and fierce attacks to dread,  
That are more harrowing than the want of bread;

Ah! who shall whisper to that misery peace!  
And say that want and insolence shall cease?

' But why not publish? —those who know too well,

Dealers in Greek, are fearful 'twill not sell;  
Then he himself is timid, troubled, slow,  
Nor likes his labours nor his griefs to show;  
The hope of fame may in his heart have place,

But he has dread and horror of disgrace;  
Nor has he that confiding, easy way,  
That might his learning and himself display;  
But to his work he from the world retreats,  
And frets and glories o'er the favourite sheets.

But see! the man himself; and sure I trace  
Signs of new joy exulting in that face  
O'er care that sleeps—we err, or we discern  
Life in thy looks—the reason may we learn?

' Yes,' he replied, ' I'm happy, I confess,  
To learn that some are pleased with happiness  
Which others feel—there are who now combine

The worthiest natures in the best design,  
To aid the letter'd poor, and soothe such ills  
as mine:

We who more keenly feel the world's contempt,

And from its miseries are the least exempt;  
Now hope shall whisper to the wounded breast,  
And grief, in soothing expectation, rest.

' Yes, I am taught that men who think,  
who feel,

Unite the pains of thoughtful men to heal;  
Not with disdainful pride, whose bounties  
make

The needy curse the benefits they take;  
Not with the idle vanity that knows  
Only a selfish joy when it bestows;  
Not with o'erbearing wealth, that, in disdain,  
Hurls the superfluous bliss at groaning pain;

But these are men who yield such bless'd relief,

That with the grievance they destroy the grief;

Their timely aid the needy sufferers find,  
Their generous manner soothes the suffering mind;

Theirs is a gracious bounty, form'd to raise  
Him whom it aids; their charity is praise;  
A common bounty may relieve distress,  
But whom the vulgar succour, they oppress  
This though a favour, is an honour too,  
Though mercy's duty, yet 'tis merit's due;  
When our relief from such resources rise,  
All painful sense of obligation dies;  
And grateful feelings in the bosom wake,  
For 'tis their offerings, not their alms, we take.

' Long may these founts of charity remain,  
And never shrink, but to be fill'd again;  
True! to the author they are now confined,  
To him who gave the treasure of his mind,  
His time, his health, and thankless found  
mankind:

But there is hope that from these founts may flow

A sideway stream, and equal good bestow;  
Good that may reach us, whom the day's  
distress

Keeps from the fame and perils of the press;  
Whom study beckons from the ills of life,  
And they from study; melancholy strife!  
Who then can say, but bounty now so free,  
And so diffused, may find its way to me?

' Yes! I may see my decent table yet  
Cheer'd with the meal that adds not to my  
debt;

May talk of those to whom so much we owe,  
And guess their names whom yet we may not  
know;

Bless'd we shall say are those who thus can  
give,

And next who thus upon the bounty live;  
Then shall I close with thanks my humble  
meal,

And feel so well—Oh! God! how I shall  
feel!

## LETTER IV. SECTS AND PROFESSIONS IN RELIGION

... But cast your eyes again,  
And view those errors which new sects maintain,  
Or which of old disturb'd the Church's peaceful reign :

And we can point each period of the time  
When they began and who begat the crime ;  
Can calculate how long th' eclipse endured ;  
Who interposed ; what digits were obscured ;  
Of all which are already pass'd away,  
We knew the rise, the progress, and decay.

DRYDEN, *Hind and Panther*,  
Part II, 1174-1182.

Oh ! said the Hind, how many sons have you  
Who call you mother, whom you never knew ?  
But most of them who that relation plead  
Are such ungracious youths as wish you dead ;

They gape at rich revenues which you hold,  
And fain would nibble at your grandame gold.

*Hind and Panther*, Part III, 1438-1443.

Sects and Professions in Religion are numerous and successive—General Effect of false Zeal—Deists—Fanatical Idea of Church Reformers—The Church of Rome—Baptists—Swedenborgians—Universalists—Jews.

Methodists of two Kinds ; Calvinistic and Arminian.

The Preaching of a Calvinistic Enthusiast—His Contempt of Learning—Dislike to sound Morality : why—His Idea of Conversion—His Success and Pretensions to Humility.

The Arminian Teacher of the older Flock—Their Notions of the Operations and Power of Satan—Description of his Devices—Their Opinion of regular Ministers—Comparison of these with the Preacher himself—A Rebuke to his Hearers ; introduces a Description of the powerful Effects of the Word in the early and awakening Days of Methodism.

'Secrs in Religion ?'—Yes, of every race  
We nurse some portion in our favour'd place ;  
Not one warm preacher of one growing sect  
Can say our Borough treats him with neglect ;  
Frequent as fashions, they with us appear,  
And you might ask, 'how think we for the year ?'

They come to us as riders in a trade,  
And with much art exhibit and persuade.

Minds are for sects of various kinds decreed,  
As diff'rent soils are form'd for diff'rent seed ;  
Some when converted sigh in sore amaze,  
And some are wrapt in joy's ecstatic blaze ;  
Others again will change to each extreme,  
They know not why—as hurried in a dream ;  
Unstable they, like water, take all forms,  
Are quick and stagnant ; have their calms  
and storms ;

High on the hills, they in the sunbeams glow,  
Then muddily they move debased and slow ;  
Or cold and frozen rest, and neither rise nor flow.

Yet none the cool and prudent teacher prize,  
On him they dote who wakes their ecstasies ;  
With passions ready primed such guide they meet,

And warn and kindle with th' imparted heat ;  
'Tis he who wakes the nameless strong desire,  
The melting rapture, and the glowing fire ;  
'Tis he who pierces deep the tortured breast,  
And stirs the terrors, never more to rest.

Opposed to these we have a prouder kind,  
Rash without heat, and without raptures blind ;

These our *Glad Tidings* unconcern'd peruse,  
Search without awe, and without fear refuse :  
The truths, the blessings found in Sacred Writ,  
Call forth their spleen, and exercise their wit ;  
Respect from these nor saints nor martyrs  
gain ;

The zeal they scorn, and they deride the pain ;  
And take their transient, cool, contemptuous  
view,

Of that which must be tried, and doubtless—  
*may be true.*

Friends of our faith we have, whom doubts  
like these,

And keen remarks, and bold objections please ;  
They grant such doubts have weaker minds  
oppress'd,

Till sound conviction gave the troubled rest.  
'But still,' they cry, 'let none their censures spare,

They but confirm the glorious hopes we share ;

From doubt, disdain, derision, scorn, and lies,  
With five-fold triumph sacred truth shall rise.'

Yes! I allow, so truth shall stand at last,  
And gain fresh glory by the conflict past :—  
As Solway-Moss (a barren mass and cold,  
Death to the seed, and poison to the fold,)  
The smiling plain and fertile vale o'erlaid,  
Choked the green sod, and kill'd the springing  
blade ;

That, changed by culture, may in time be  
seen,

Enrich'd by golden grain, and pasture green ;  
And these fair acres rented and enjoy'd,  
May those excel by Solway-Moss destroy'd.<sup>1</sup>

Still must have mourn'd the tenant of the  
day,

For hopes destroy'd, and harvests swept away ;  
To him the gain of future years unknown,  
The instant grief and suffering were his own :  
So must I grieve for many a wounded heart,  
Chill'd by those doubts which bolder minds  
impart :

Truth in the end shall shine divinely clear,  
But sad the darkness till those times appear ;  
Contests for truth, as wars for freedom, yield  
Glory and joy to those who gain the field :  
But still the Christian must in pity sigh  
For all who suffer, and uncertain die.

Here are, who all the Church maintains  
approve,

But yet the Church herself they will not love ;  
In angry speech, they blame the carnal tie,  
Which pure Religion lost her spirit by ;  
What time from prisons, flames, and tortures  
led,

She slumber'd careless in a royal bed ;  
To make, they add, the Church's glory shine,  
Should Diocletian reign, not Constantine.

'In pomp,' they cry, 'is England's Church  
array'd,

Her cool reformers wrought like men afraid,  
We would have pull'd her gorgeous temples  
down,

And spurn'd her mitre, and defiled her gown ;  
We would have trodden low both bench and  
stall,

Nor left a title remaining, great or small.'

Let us be serious—Should such trials come,  
Are they themselves prepared for martyrdom?  
It seems to us that our reformers knew  
Th' important work they undertook to do ;  
An equal priesthood they were loth to try,  
Lest zeal and care should with ambition die ;

To them it seem'd that, take the tenth away,  
Yet priests must eat, and you must feed or  
pay :

Would they indeed, who hold such pay in  
scorn,

Put on the muzzle when they tread the corn ?  
Would they all, gratis, watch and tend the  
fold,

Nor take one fleece to keep them from the  
cold ?

Men are not equal, and 'tis meet and right  
That robes and titles our respect excite ;  
Order requires it ; 'tis by vulgar pride  
That such regard is censured and denied ;  
Or by that false enthusiastic zeal,  
That thinks the spirit will the priest reveal,  
And show to all men, by their powerful speech,  
Who are appointed and inspired to teach :  
Alas! could we the dangerous rule believe,  
Whom for their teacher should the crowd  
receive ?

Since all the varying kinds demand respect,  
All press you on to join their chosen sect,  
Although but in this single point agreed,  
'Desert your churches and adopt our creed.'

We know full well how much our forms  
offend

The burthen'd papist and the simple friend ;  
Him, who new robes for every service takes,  
And who in drab and beaver sighs and shakes ;  
He on the priest, whom hood and band adorn,  
Looks with the sleepy eye of silent scorn ;  
But him I would not for my friend and guide,  
Who views such things with spleen, or wears  
with pride.

See next our several sects,—but first behold  
The Church of Rome, who here is poor and  
old :

Use not triumphant rail'ry, or at least,  
Let not thy mother be a whore and beast ;  
Great was her pride indeed in ancient times,  
Yet shall we think of nothing but her crimes ?  
Exalted high above all earthly things,  
She placed her foot upon the neck of kings ;  
But some have deeply since avenged the  
crown,

And thrown her glory and her honours down ;  
Nor neck nor ear can she of kings command,  
Nor place a foot upon her own fair land.

Among her sons, with us a quiet few,  
Obscure themselves, her ancient state review ;  
And fond and melancholy glances cast  
On power insulted, and on triumph pass'd :



They look, they can but look, with many  
a sigh,

On sacred buildings doom'd in dust to lie ;  
'On seats,' they tell, 'where priests 'mid  
tapers dim

Breathed the warm prayer, or tuned the  
midnight hymn ;

Where trembling penitents their guilt confess'd,

Where want had succour, and contrition rest ;  
There weary men from trouble found relief,  
There men in sorrow found repose from grief :  
To scenes like these the fainting soul retired ;  
Revenge and anger in these cells expired ;  
By pity soothed, remorse lost half her fears,  
And soften'd pride dropp'd penitential tears.

'Thence convent-walls and nunnery-spires  
arose,

In pleasant spots which monk or abbot chose ;  
When counts and barons saints devoted fed,  
And making cheap exchange, had pray'r for  
bread.

'Now all is lost, the earth where abbeys  
stood

Is layman's land, the glebe, the stream, the  
wood ;

His oxen low where monks retired to eat,  
His cows repose upon the prior's seat ;  
And wanton doves within the cloisters bill,  
Where the chaste votary warr'd with wanton  
will.'

Such is the change they mourn, but they  
restrain

The rage of grief, and passively complain.

We've Baptists old and new ; forbear to  
ask

What the distinction—I decline the task ;  
This I perceive, that when a sect grows old,  
Converts are few, and the converted cold :  
First comes the hot-bed heat, and while it  
glows

The plants spring up, and each with vigour  
grows ;

Then comes the cooler day, and though awhile  
The verdure prospers and the blossoms smile,  
Yet poor the fruit, and form'd by long delay,  
Nor will the profits for the culture pay ;  
The skilful gard'ner then no longer stops,  
But turns to other beds for bearing crops.

Some Swedenborgians in our streets are  
found,

Those wandering walkers on enchanted  
ground ;

Who in our world can other worlds survey,  
And speak with spirits though confined in clay :  
Of Bible-mysteries they the keys possess,  
Assured themselves, where wiser men but  
guess :

'Tis theirs to see around, about, above,—  
How spirits mingle thoughts, and angels move ;  
Those whom our grosser views from us exclude,  
To them appear—a heavenly multitude ;  
While the dark sayings, seal'd to men like us,  
Their priests interpret, and their flocks discuss.

But while these gifted men, a favour'd fold,  
New powers exhibit and new worlds behold ;  
Is there not danger lest their minds confound  
The pure above them with the gross around ?  
May not these Phaetons, who thus contrive  
'Twixt heaven above and earth beneath to  
drive,

When from their flaming chariots they descend,  
The worlds they visit in their fancies blend ?  
Alas ! too sure on both they bring disgrace,  
Their earth is crazy, and their heav'n is base.

We have, it seems, who treat, and doubtless  
well,

Of a chastising, not awarding hell ;  
Who are assured that an offended God  
Will cease to use the thunder and the rod ;  
A soul on earth, by crime and folly stain'd,  
When here corrected has improvement gain'd ;  
In other state still more improved to grow,  
And nobler powers in happier world to know ;  
New strength to use in each divine employ,  
And, more enjoying, looking to more joy.

A pleasing vision ! could we thus be sure  
Polluted souls would be at length so pure ;  
The view is happy, we may think it just,  
It may be true—but who shall add it must ?  
To the plain words and sense of sacred writ,  
With all my heart I reverently submit ;  
But where it leaves me doubtful, I'm afraid  
To call conjecture to my reason's aid ;  
Thy thoughts, thy ways, great God ! are not  
as mine,

And to thy mercy I my soul resign.

Jews are with us, but far unlike to those,  
Who, led by David, warr'd with Israel's foes ;  
Unlike to those whom his imperial son  
Taught truths divine—the preacher Solomon :  
Nor war nor wisdom yield our Jews delight ;  
They will not study, and they dare not fight.<sup>a</sup>

These are, with us, a slavish, knavish crew,  
Shame and dishonour to the name of Jew ;

The poorest masters of the meanest arts,  
With cunning heads, and cold and cautious  
hearts ;

They grope their dirty way to petty gains,  
While poorly paid for their nefarious pains.

Amazing race ! deprived of land and laws,  
A general language, and a public cause ;  
With a religion none can now obey,  
With a reproach that none can take away :  
A people still, whose common ties are gone ;  
Who, mix'd with every race, are lost in none.

What said their prophet ?—' Shouldst thou  
disobey,

The Lord shall take thee from thy land away ;  
Thou shalt a by-word and a proverb be,  
And all shall wonder at thy woes and thee ;  
Daughter and son shalt thou, while captive,  
have,

And see them made the bond-maid and the  
slave ;

He, whom thou leav'st, the Lord thy God,  
shall bring

War to thy country on an eagle-wing :  
A people strong and dreadful to behold,  
Stern to the young, remorseless to the old ;  
Masters whose speech thou canst not under-  
stand,

By cruel signs shall give the harsh command :  
Doubtful of life shalt thou by night, by day,  
For grief, and dread, and trouble pine away ;  
Thy evening-wish,—Would God ! I saw the  
sun ;

Thy morning-sigh,—Would God ! the day  
were done.

Thus shalt thou suffer, and to distant times  
Regret thy misery, and lament thy crimes.' <sup>3</sup>

A part there are, whom doubtless man  
might trust,

Worthy as wealthy, pure, religious, just ;  
They who with patience, yet with rapture look  
On the strong promise of the sacred book :  
As unfulfill'd th' endearing words they view,  
And blind to truth, yet own their prophets  
true ;

Well pleased they look for Sion's coming state,  
Nor think of Julian's boast and Julian's fate. <sup>4</sup>

More might I add ; I might describe the  
flocks

Made by seceders from the ancient stocks ;  
Those who will not to any guide submit,  
Nor find one creed to their conceptions fit—  
Each sect, they judge, in something goes astray,  
And every church has lost the certain way ;

Then for themselves they carve out creeds and  
laws,

And weigh their atoms, and divide their  
straws.

A sect remains, which though divided long  
In hostile parties, both are fierce and strong,  
And into each enlists a warm and zealous  
through.

Soon as they rose in fame, the strife arose,  
The Calvinistic these, th' Arminian those ;  
With Wesley some remain'd, the remnant  
Whitfield chose.

Now various leaders both the parties take,  
And the divided hosts their new divisions  
make.

See yonder preacher ! to his people pass,  
Borne up and swell'd by tabernacle-gas ;  
Much he discourses, and of various points,  
All unconnected, void of limbs and joints ;  
He rails, persuades, explains, and moves the  
will,

By fierce, bold words, and strong mechanic  
skill.

' That Gospel, Paul with zeal and love  
maintain'd,

To others lost, to you is now explain'd ;  
No worldly learning can these points discuss,  
Books teach them not as they are taught to us ;  
Illiterate call us ! let their wisest man  
Draw forth his thousands as your teacher can :  
They give their moral precepts ; so, they say,  
Did Epictetus once, and Seneca ;

One was a slave, and slaves we all must be,  
Until the Spirit comes and sets us free.

Yet hear you nothing from such men but  
works ;

They make the Christian service like the  
Turks'.

' Hark to the churchman : day by day he  
cries,

" Children of men, be virtuous and be wise ;  
Seek patience, justice, temp'rance, meekness,  
truth ;

In age be courteous, be sedate in youth."—  
So they advise, and when such things be read,  
How can we wonder that their flocks are dead ?

' The heathens wrote of virtue, they could  
dwell

On such light points : in them it might be well,  
They might for virtue strive ; but I maintain,  
Our strife for virtue would be proud and vain.  
When Samson carried Gaza's gates so far,  
Lack'd he a helping hand to bear the bar ?

Thus the most virtuous must in bondage groan :

Samson is grace, and carries all alone.<sup>s</sup>

‘Hear you not priests their feeble spirits spend,

In bidding sinners turn to God, and mend ;  
To check their passions and to walk aright,  
To run the race, and fight the glorious fight ?  
Nay more—to pray, to study, to improve,  
To grow in goodness, to advance in love ?

‘Oh ! babes and sucklings, dull of heart and slow,

Can grace be gradual ? Can conversion grow ?

The work is done by instantaneous call ;  
Converts at once are made, or not at all ;  
Nothing is left to grow, reform, amend ;  
The first emotion is the movement’s end :  
If once forgiven, debt can be no more ;  
If once adopted, will the heir be poor ?  
The man who gains the twenty-thousand prize,  
Does he by little and by little rise ?  
There can no fortune for the soul be made,  
By peddling cares and savings in her trade.

‘Why are our sins forgiven ?—Priests reply,  
—“ Because by faith on mercy we rely ;  
Because, believing, we repent and pray.”—  
Is this their doctrine ?—then they go astray :  
We’re pardon’d neither for belief nor deed,  
For faith nor practice, principle nor creed ;  
Nor for our sorrow for our former sin,  
Nor for our fears when better thoughts begin ;  
Nor prayers nor penance in the cause avail,  
All strong remorse, all soft contrition fail ;—  
It is the *call* ! till that proclaims us free,  
In darkness, doubt, and bondage we must be ;  
Till that *assures* us, we’ve in vain endured,  
And all is over when we’re once assured.

‘This is conversion :—First there comes a cry  
Which utters, “ Sinner, thou’rt condemn’d to die ; ”

Then the struck soul to every aid repairs,  
To church and altar, ministers and prayers ;  
In vain she strives,—involv’d, ingulf’d in sin,  
She looks for hell, and seems already in :  
When in this travail, the new birth comes on,  
And in an instant every pang is gone ;  
The mighty work is done without our pains,—  
Claim but a part, and not a part remains.

‘All this experience tells the soul, and yet  
These moral men their pence and farthings set  
Against the terrors of the countless debt :

But such compounders, when they come to jail,

Will find that virtues never serve as bail.

‘So much to duties : now to learning look,  
And see their priesthood piling book on book ;  
Yea, books of infidels, we’re told, and plays,  
Put out by heathens in the wink’d-on days ;  
The very letters are of crooked kind,  
And show the strange perverseness of their mind.

Have I this learning ? When the Lord would speak,

Think ye he needs the Latin or the Greek ?  
And lo ! with all their learning, when they rise  
To preach, in view the ready sermon lies ;  
Some low-prized stuff they purchased at the stalls,

And more like Seneca’s than mine or Paul’s :  
Children of bondage, how should they explain  
The spirit’s freedom, while they wear a chain ?  
They study words, for meanings grow perplex’d,

And slowly hunt for truth from text to text,  
Through Greek and Hebrew :—we the meaning seek

Of that within, who every tongue can speak :  
This all can witness ; yet the more I know,  
The more a meek and humble mind I show.

‘No ; let the pope, the high and mighty priest,

Lord to the poor, and servant to the beast ;  
Let bishops, deans, and prebendaries swell  
With pride and fatness till their hearts rebel :  
I’m meek and modest—If I could be proud,  
This crowded meeting, lo ! th’ amazing crowd !  
Your mute attention, and your meek respect,  
My spirit’s fervour, and my words’ effect,  
Might stir th’ unguarded soul ; and oft to me  
The tempter speaks, whom I compel to flee ;  
He goes in fear, for he my force has tried,—  
Such is my power ! but can you call it pride ?

‘No, fellow-pilgrims ! of the things I’ve shown

I might be proud, were they indeed my own !  
But they are lent ; and well you know the source,

Of all that’s mine, and must confide of course ;  
Mine ! no, I err ; ’tis but consign’d to me,  
And I am nought but steward and trustee.’

FAR other doctrines yon Arminian speaks ;  
‘Seek grace,’ he cries, ‘for he shall find who seeks.’

This is the ancient stock by Wesley led ;  
 They the pure body, he the reverend head :  
 All innovation they with dread decline,  
 Their John the elder, was the John divine.  
 Hence, still their moving prayer, the melting  
 hymn,

The varied accent, and the active limb ;  
 Hence that implicit faith in Satan's might,  
 And their own matchless prowess in the fight.  
 In every act they see that lurking foe,  
 Let loose awhile, about the world to go ;  
 A dragon flying round the earth, to kill  
 The heavenly hope, and prompt the carnal  
 will ;

Whom sainted knights attack in sinners' cause,  
 And force the wounded victim from his paws ;  
 Who but for them would man's whole race  
 subdue,

For not a hireling will the foe pursue.

' Show me one churchman who will rise and  
 pray

Through half the night, though lab'ring all  
 the day,

Always abounding—show me him, I say : '—  
 Thus cries the preacher, and he adds, ' their  
 sheep

Satan devours at leisure as they sleep.  
 Not so with us ; we drive him from the fold,  
 For ever barking and for ever bold :

While they securely slumber, all his schemes  
 Take full effect,—the devil never dreams:  
 Watchful and changeful through the world  
 he goes,

And few can trace this deadliest of their foes ;  
 But I detect, and at his work surprise  
 The subtle serpent under all disguise

' Thus to man's soul the foe of souls will  
 speak,

—" A saint elect, you can have nought to  
 seek ;

Why all this labour in so plain a case,  
 Such care to run, when certain of the race ? "

All this he urges to the carnal will,  
 He knows you're slothful, and would have  
 you still :

Be this your answer,—“ Satan, I will keep  
 Still on the watch till you are laid asleep.”  
 Thus too the Christian's progress he'll re-  
 tard :—

“ The gates of mercy are for ever barr'd ;  
 And that with bolts so driven and so stout,  
 Ten thousand workmen cannot wrench them  
 out.”

To this deceit you have but one reply,—  
 Give to the father of all lies, the lie.

' A sister's weakness he'll by fits surprise,  
 His her wild laughter, his her piteous cries ;  
 And should a pastor at her side attend,  
 He'll use her organs to abuse her friend :  
 These are possessions—unbelieving wits  
 Impute them all to nature : “ They're her fits,  
 Caused by commotions in the nerves and  
 brains ; ”—

Vain talk ! but they'll be fited for their pains.

' These are in part the ills the foe has  
 wrought,

And these the churchman thinks not worth  
 his thought ;

They bid the troubled try for peace and rest,  
 Compose their minds, and be no more dis-  
 tress'd ;

As well might they command the passive shore  
 To keep secure, and be o'erflowed no more ;  
 To the wrong subject is their skill applied,—  
 To act like workmen, they should stem the tide.

' These are the church-physicians ; they  
 are paid

With noble fees for their advice and aid ;  
 Yet know they not the inward pulse to feel,  
 To ease the anguish, or the wound to heal.  
 With the sick sinner, thus their work begins,  
 “ Do you repent you of your former sins ?

Will you amend if you revive and live ?  
 And, pardon seeking, will you pardon give ?  
 Have you belief in what your Lord has done,  
 And are you thankful ?—all is well, my son.”

' A way far different ours—we thus surprise  
 A soul with questions, and demand replies ;

“ How dropp'd you first,” I ask, “ the  
 legal yoke ?

What the first word the living Witness spoke ?  
 Perceived you thunders roar and lightnings  
 shine,

And tempests gathering ere the birth divine ?  
 Did fire, and storm, and earthquake all  
 appear

Before that still small voice, *What dost thou  
 here ?*

Hast thou by day and night, and soon and late,  
 Waited and watch'd before Admission-gate ;  
 And so a pilgrim and a soldier pass'd  
 To Sion's hill through battle and through  
 blast ?

Then in thy way didst thou thy foe attack,  
 And mad'st thou proud Apollyon turn his  
 back ? ”

'Heart-searching things are these, and  
shake the mind,

Yea, like the rustling of a mighty wind.

'Thus would I ask :—"Nay, let me question now,

How sink my sayings in your bosoms ? how ?  
Feel you a quickening ? drops the subject  
deep ?

Stupid and stony, no ! you're all asleep ;

Listless and lazy, waiting for a close,

As if at church—Do I allow repose ?

Am I a legal minister ? do I

With form or rubrick, rule or rite comply ?

Then whence this quiet, tell me, I beseech ?

One might believe you heard your rector  
preach,

Or his assistant dreamer :—Oh ! return,  
Ye times of burning, when the heart would burn,  
Now hearts are ice, and you, my freezing fold,  
Have spirits sunk and sad, and bosoms stony-  
cold."

'Oh ! now again for those prevailing powers,  
Which once began this mighty work of ours ;  
When the wide field, God's temple, was the  
place,

And birds flew by to catch a breath of grace ;  
When 'mid his timid friends and threat'ning  
foes,

Our zealous chief as Paul at Athens rose :  
When with infernal spite and knotty clubs  
The ill-one arm'd his scoundrels and his scrubs ;  
And there were flying all around the spot  
Brands at the preacher, but they touch'd  
him not ;

Stakes brought to smite him, threaten'd in  
his cause,

And tongues, attuned to curses, roar'd  
applause ;

Louder and louder grew his awful tones,  
Sobbing and sighs were heard, and rueful  
groans ;

Soft women fainted, prouder man express'd  
Wonder and wo, and butchers smote the  
breast ;

Eyes wept, ears tingled ; stiff'ning on each  
head,

The hair drew back, and Satan howl'd and fled.

'In that soft season when the gentle breeze  
Rises all round, and swells by slow degrees ;  
Till tempests gather, when through all the  
sky

The thunders rattle, and the lightnings fly ;  
When rain in torrents wood and vale deform,  
And all is horror, hurricane, and storm :

'So, when the preacher in that glorious time,  
Than clouds more melting, more than storm  
sublime,

Dropp'd the new word, there came a charm  
around ;

Tremors and terrors rose upon the sound ;  
The stubborn spirits by his force he broke,  
As the fork'd lightning rives the knotted oak :  
Fear, hope, dismay, all signs of shame or grace,  
Chain'd every foot, or featured every face ;  
Then took his sacred trump a louder swell,  
And now they groan'd, they sicken'd, and  
they fell ;

Again he sounded, and we heard the cry  
Of the word-wounded, as about to die ;  
Further and further spread the conquering  
word,

As loud he cried—"the battle of the Lord."  
Ev'n those apart who were the sound denied,  
Fell down instinctive, and in spirit died.  
Nor staid he yet—his eye, his frown, his  
speech,

His very gesture had a power to teach ;  
With outstretch'd arms, strong voice and  
piercing call,

He won the field, and made the Dragons fall ;  
And thus in triumph took his glorious way,  
Through scenes of horror, terror, and dismay.'

## LETTER V. ELECTIONS

Say then which class to greater folly stoop,  
The great in promise, or the poor in hope?

Be brave, then, for your captain is brave, and  
vows reformation; there shall be in  
England seven halfpenny loaves sold for  
a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have  
ten hoops and I will make it felony to  
drink small beer: all shall eat and drink  
on my score, and I will apparel them all in  
one livery, that they may agree like  
brothers—... and worship me their lord.

SHAKESPEARE, *Henry VI*, Part II,  
Act iv, Sc. 2.

The Evils of the Contest, and how in part to  
be avoided—The Miseries endured by a  
Friend of the Candidate—The various  
Liberties taken with him, who has no  
personal Interest in the Success—The  
unreasonable Expectations of Voters—  
The Censures of the opposing Party—The  
Vices as well as Follies shown in such Time  
of Contest—Plans and Cunning of Electors  
—Evils which remain after the Decision,  
opposed in vain by the Efforts of the  
Friendly, and of the Successful; among  
whom is the Mayor—Story of his Advance-  
ment till he was raised to the Government  
of the Borough—These Evils not to be  
placed in Balance with the Liberty of the  
People, but are yet Subjects of just Com-  
plaint.

Yes, our Election's past, and we've been free,  
Somewhat as madmen without keepers be;  
And such desire of freedom has been shown,  
That both the parties wish'd her all their own:  
All our free smiths and cobblers in the town  
Were loth to lay such pleasant freedom down;  
To put the bludgeon and cockade aside,  
And let us pass unhurt and undefied.

True! you might then your party's sign  
produce,

And so escape with only half th' abuse;  
With half the danger as you walk'd along,  
With rage and threat'ning but from half the  
throng:

This you might do, and not your fortune mend,  
For where you lost a foe, you gain'd a friend;  
And to distress you, vex you, and expose,  
Election-friends are worse than any foes;  
The party-curse is with the canvass past,  
But party-friendship, for your grief, will last.

Friends of all kinds, the civil and the rude,  
Who humbly wish, or boldly dare t' intrude;  
These beg or take a liberty to come,  
(Friends should be free,) and make your house  
their home;

They know that warfinly you their cause  
espouse,

And come to make their boastings and their  
bows:

You scorn their manners, you their words  
mistrust,

But you must hear them, and they know you  
must.

One plainly sees a friendship firm and true,  
Between the noble candidate and you;  
So humbly begs (and states at large the case),  
'You'll think of Bobby and the little place.'

Stifling his shame by drink, a wretch will  
come,

And prate your wife and daughter from the  
room:

In pain you hear him, and at heart despise,  
Yet with heroic mind your pangs disguise;  
And still in patience to the sot attend,  
To show what men can bear to serve a friend.

One enters hungry—not to be denied,  
And takes his place and jokes—'We're of  
a side.'

Yet worse, the proser who, upon the strength  
Of his one vote, has tales of three hours' length;  
This sorry rogue you bear, yet with surprise  
Start at his oaths, and sicken at his lies.

Then comes there one, and tells in friendly  
way,

What the opponents in their anger say;  
All that through life has vex'd you, all abuse,  
Will this kind friend in pure regard produce;  
And having through your own offences run,  
Adds (as appendage) what your friends have  
done.

Has any female cousin made a trip  
To Gretna-Green, or more vexatious slip?  
Has your wife's brother, or your uncle's son  
Done aught amiss, or is he thought t' have  
done?

Is there of all your kindred some who lack  
Vision direct, or have a gibbous back?  
From your unlucky name may quips and puns  
Bemade by these upbraiding Goths and Huns?

To some great public character have you  
Assign'd the fame to worth and talents due,  
Proud of your praise ?—In this, in any case,  
Where the brute-spirit may affix disgrace,  
These friends will smiling bring it, and the  
while

You silent sit, and practise for a smile.

Vain of their power, and of their value sure,  
They nearly guess the tortures you endure ;  
Nor spare one pang—for they perceive your  
heart

Goes with the cause ; you'd die before you'd  
start ;

Do what they may, they're sure you'll not  
offend

Men who have pledged their honours to your  
friend.

Those friends indeed, who start as in a race,  
May love the sport, and laugh at this dis-  
grace ;

They have in view the glory and the prize,  
Nor heed the dirty steps by which they rise :  
But we their poor associates lose the fame,  
Though more than partners in the toil and  
shame.

Were this the whole ; and did the time  
produce

But shame and toil, but riot and abuse ;  
We might be then from serious griefs exempt,  
And view the whole with pity and contempt.

Alas ! but here the vilest passions rule ;  
It is Seduction's, is Temptation's school ;

Where vices mingle in the oddest ways,  
The grossest slander and the dirtiest praise ;

Flattery enough to make the vainest sick,  
And clumsy stratagem, and scoundrel trick ;

Nay more, your anger and contempt to cause,  
These, while they fish for profit, claim  
applause ;

Bribed, bought and bound, they banish shame  
and fear ;

Tell you they're stanch, and have a soul  
sincere ;

Then talk of honour, and if doubt's express'd,  
Show where it lies, and smite upon the breast.

Among these worthies, some at first declare  
For whom they vote ; he then has most to  
spare ;

Others hang off—when coming to the post  
Is spurring time, and then he'll spare the  
most :

While some demurring, wait, and find at last  
The bidding languish, and the market pass'd ;

CR.

These will affect all bribery to condemn,  
And be it Satan laughs, he laughs at them.

Some too are pious—One desired the Lord  
To teach him where ' to drop his little word ;  
To lend his vote, where it will profit best ;  
Promotion came not from the east or west ;  
But as their freedom had promoted some,  
He should be glad to know which way 'twould  
come.

It was a naughty world, and where to sell  
His precious charge, was more than he could  
tell.'

' But you succeeded ? '—true, at mighty  
cost,

And our good friend, I fear, will think he's  
lost :

Inns, horses, chaises, dinners, balls and  
notes ;

What fill'd their purses, and what drench'd  
their throats ;

The private pension, and indulgent lease,—  
Have all been granted to these friends who  
fleece ;

Friends who will hang like burs upon his  
coat,

And boundless judge the value of a vote.

And though the terrors of the time be  
pass'd,

There still remain the scatterings of the  
blast ;

The boughs are parted that entwined before,  
And ancient harmony exists no more ;

The gusts of wrath our peaceful seats deform,  
And sadly flows the sighing of the storm :

Those who have gain'd are sorry for the  
gloom,

But they who lost, unwilling peace should  
come ;

There open envy, here suppress'd delight,  
Yet live till time shall better thoughts excite,

And so prepare us by a six-years' truce,  
Again for riot, insult, and abuse.

Our worthy mayor, on the victorious part,  
Cries out for peace, and cries with all his  
heart ;

He, civil creature ! ever does his best,  
To banish wrath from every voter's breast ;

' For where,' says he, with reason strong and  
plain,

' Where is the profit ? what will anger gain ? '

His short stout person he is wont to brace  
In good brown broad-cloth, edged with two-

inch lace,

F

When in his seat ; and still the coat seems  
new,

Preserved by common use of seaman's blue

He was a fisher from his earliest day,  
And placed his nets within the Borough's bay ;  
Where by his skates, his herrings, and his  
soles,

He lived, nor dream'd of corporation-doles <sup>1</sup> ;  
But toiling saved, and saving, never ceased  
Till he had box'd up twelve score pounds at  
least :

He knew not money's power, but judged it best  
Safe in his trunk to let his treasure rest ;  
Yet to a friend complain'd : ' Sad charge, to  
keep

So many pounds, and then I cannot sleep : '

' Then put it out,' replied the friend :—  
' What, give

My money up ? why then I could not live : '  
' Nay, but for interest place it in his hands,  
Who'll give you mortgage on his house or  
lands.'

' Oh but,' said Daniel, ' that's a dangerous  
plan ;

He may be robb'd like any other man : '

' Still he is bound, and you may be at rest,  
More safe the money than within your chest ;  
And you'll receive, from all deductions clear,  
Five pounds for every hundred, every year.'

' What good in that ? ' quoth Daniel, ' for 'tis  
plain,

If part I take, there can but part remain : '

' What ! you, my friend, so skill'd in gainful  
things,

Have you to learn what interest money  
brings ? '

' Not so,' said Daniel, ' perfectly I know,  
He's the most interest who has most to  
show.'

' True ! and he'll show the more, the more he  
lends ;

Thus he his weight and consequence extends ;  
For they who borrow must restore each sum,  
And pay for use—What, Daniel, art thou  
dumb ? '

For much amazed was that good man—  
' Indeed ! '

Said he with gladning eye, ' will money breed ?

How have I lived ? I grieve, with all my  
heart,

For my late knowledge in this precious art :—

Five pounds for every hundred will he give ?  
And then the hundred ?—I begin to live.'

So he began, and other means he found,  
As he went on, to multiply a pound :

Though blind so long to interest, all allow  
That no man better understands it now :

Him in our body-corporate we chose,  
And once among us, he above us rose ;

Stepping from post to post, he reach'd the  
chair,

And there he now reposes—that's the mayor.

But 'tis not he, 'tis not the kinder few,

The mild, the good, who can our peace renew ;

A peevish humour swells in every eye,

The warm are angry, and the cool are shy ;

There is no more the social board at whist,

The good old partners are with scorn dis-  
miss'd ;

No more with dog and lantern comes the  
maid,

To guide the mistress when the rubber's  
play'd ;

Sad shifts are made lest ribbons blue and  
reen

Should at one table, at one time be seen :

On care and merit none will now rely,

'Tis party sells, what party-friends must  
buy ;

The warmest burgess wears a bodger's coat,  
And fashion gains less int'rest than a vote ;

Uncheck'd the vintner still his poison vends,  
For he too votes, and can command his friends.

But this admitted ; be it still agreed,  
These ill effects from noble cause proceed ;

Though like some vile excrescences they be,  
The tree they spring from is a sacred tree,

And its true produce, strength and liberty.

Yet if we could th' attendant ills suppress,  
If we could make the sum of mischief less ;

If we could warm and angry men persuade  
No more man's common comforts to invade ;

And that old ease and harmony re-seat  
In all our meetings, so in joy to meet ;

Much would of glory to the Muse ensue,  
And our good vicar would have less to do.



## LETTER VI. PROFESSIONS—LAW

Quid leges sine moribus  
Vanæ proficiunt ?  
HORACE, *Carm. lib. iii, od. 24. 35, 36.*  
Vae misero mihi! Mea nunc facinora  
Aperiuntur, clam quæ speravi fore.  
PLAUT. *Trucul. Act iv, Sc. 3, v. 20.*

Trades and Professions of every Kind to be found in the Borough—Its Seamen and Soldiers—Law, the Danger of the Subject—Coddington's Offence—Attorneys increased; their Splendid Appearance, how supported—Some worthy Exceptions—Spirit of Litigation, how stirred up—A Boy articulated as a Clerk; his Ideas—How this Profession perverts the Judgment—Actions appear through this Medium in a false Light—Success from honest Application—Archer a worthy Character—Swallow a Character of different Kind—His Origin, Progress, Success, &c.

'TRADES and Professions'—(these are themes the Muse,  
Left to her freedom, would forbear to choose;

But to our Borough (they in truth belong,  
And we, perforce, must take them in our song.

Be it then known that we can boast of these  
In all denominations, ranks, degrees;  
All who our numerous wants through life supply,

Who soothe us sick, attend us when we die,  
Or for the dead their various talents try.  
Then have we those who live by secret arts,  
By hunting fortunes, and by stealing hearts;  
Or who by nobler means themselves advance;  
Or who subsist by charity and chance.

Say, of our native heroes shall I boast,  
Born in our streets, to thunder on our coast,  
Our Borough-seamen? Could the timid Muse  
More patriot-ardour in their breasts infuse;  
Or could she paint their merit or their skill,  
She wants not love, alacrity, or will;  
Yet needless all, that ardour is their own,  
And for their deeds, themselves have made them known.

Soldiers in arms! Defenders of our soil!  
Who from destruction save us; who from spoil

Protect the sons of peace, who traffic, or who toil;

Would I could duly praise you; that each deed

Your foes might honour, and your friends might read:

This too is needless; you've imprinted well  
Your powers, and told what I should feebly tell:

Beside, a Muse like mine, to satire prone,  
Would fail in themes where there is praise alone.

—Law shall I sing, or what to Law belongs?  
Alas! there may be danger in such songs;  
A foolish rhyme, 'tis said, a trifling thing,  
The law found treason, for it touch'd the king.

But kings have mercy, in these happy times,  
Or surely *one* had suffer'd for his rhymes;  
Our glorious Edwards and our Henrys bold;  
So touch'd, had kept the reprobate in hold,  
But he escaped,—nor fear, thank Heav'n,  
have I,

Who love my king, for such offence to die.  
But I am taught the danger would be much,  
If these poor lines should one attorney touch—

(One of those *limbs* of law who're always here;  
The *heads* come down to guide them twice a year.)

I might not swing indeed, but he in sport  
Would whip a rhymist on from court to court;  
Stop him in each, and make him pay for all  
The long proceedings in that dreaded Hall:—  
Then let my numbers flow discreetly on,  
Warn'd by the fate of luckless Coddington,\*  
Lest some *attorney* (pardon me the name)  
Should wound a poor *solicitor* for fame.

One man of law in George the Second's reign

Was all our frugal fathers would maintain;  
He too was kept for forms; a man of peace,  
To frame a contract, or to draw a lease:  
He had a clerk, with whom he used to write  
All the day long, with whom he drank at night;

Spare was his visage, moderate his bill,  
And he so kind, men doubted of his skill.

\* The account of Coddington occurs in *The Mirror for Magistrates*; he suffered in the reign of Richard III.

Who thinks of this, with some amazement  
sees,  
For one so poor, three flourishing at ease ;  
Nay, one in splendour !—see that mansion  
tall,  
That lofty door, the far-resounding hall ;  
Well-furnish'd rooms, plate shining on the  
board,  
Gay liveried lads, and cellar proudly stored :  
Then say how comes it that such fortunes  
crown  
These sons of strife, these terrors of the town ?  
Lo! that small office! there th' incautious  
guest  
Goes blindfold in, and that maintains the  
rest ;  
There in his web, th' observant spider lies,  
And peers about for fat intruding flies ;  
Doubtful at first, he hears the distant hum,  
And feels them flutt'ring as they nearer come ;  
They buzz and blink, and doubtfully they  
tread  
On the strong birdlime of the utmost thread ;  
But when they're once entangled by the gin,  
With what an eager clasp he draws them in ;  
Nor shall they 'scape, till after long delay,  
And all that sweetens life is drawn away.  
' Nay, this,' you cry, ' is common-place, the  
tale  
Of petty tradesmen o'er their evening-ale ;  
There are who, living by the legal pen,  
Are held in honour,—“ honourable men.”'  
Doubtless—there are who hold manorial  
courts,  
Or whom the trust of powerful friends sup-  
ports ;  
Or who, by labouring through a length of  
time,  
Have pick'd their way, unsullied by a crime.  
These are the few—in this, in every place,  
Fix the litigious rupture-stirring race ;  
Who to contention as to trade are led,  
To whom dispute and strife are bliss and  
bread.  
There is a doubtful pauper, and we think  
'Tis not with us to give him meat and  
drink ;  
There is a child, and 'tis not mighty clear  
Whether the mother lived with us a year :  
A road's indicted, and our seniors doubt  
If in our proper boundary or without :  
But what says our attorney ? He our friend  
Tells us 'tis just and manly to contend.

' What! to a neighbouring parish yield  
your cause,  
While you have money, and the nation laws ?  
What! lose without a trial, that which tried,  
May—nay it must—be given on our side ?  
All men of spirit would contend ; such men  
Than lose a pound would rather hazard  
ten.  
What, be imposed on ? No ! a British soul  
Despises imposition, Eates control ;  
The law is open ; let them, if they dare,  
Support their cause ; the Borough need not  
spare :  
All I advise is vigour and good-will :  
Is it agreed then ?—Shall I file a bill ?'  
The trader, grazier, merchant, priest and  
all,  
Whose sons aspiring, to professions call,  
Choose from their lads some bold and subtle  
boy,  
And judge him fitted for this grave employ :  
Him a keen old practitioner admits,  
To write five years and exercise his wits :  
The youth has heard—it is in fact his creed—  
Mankind dispute, that lawyers may be  
fee'd :  
Jails, bailiffs, writs, all terms and threats of  
law,  
Grow now familiar as once top and taw ;  
Rage, hatred, fear, the mind's severer ills,  
All bring employment, all augment his bills :  
As feels the surgeon for the mangled limb,  
The mangled mind is but a job for him ;  
Thus taught to think, these legal reasoners  
draw  
Morals and maxims from their views of law ;  
They cease to judge by precepts taught in  
schools,  
By man's plain sense, or by religious rules ;  
No ! nor by law itself, in truth discern'd,  
But as its statutes may be warp'd and turn'd :  
How should they judge of man, his word and  
deed,  
They in their books and not their bosoms  
read :  
Of some good act you speak with just ap-  
plause,  
' No ! no !' says he, ' 'twould be a losing  
cause :'  
Blame you some tyrant's deed ?—he answers  
' Nay,  
He'll get a verdict ; heed you what you  
say.'

Thus to conclusions from examples led,  
The heart resigns all judgment to the head ;  
Law, law alone for ever kept in view,  
His measures guides, and rules his conscience  
too ;

Of ten commandments, he confesses three  
Are yet in force, and tells you which they be,  
As law instructs him, thus : ' Your neighbour's wife

You must not take, his chattels, nor his life ;  
Break these decrees, for damage you must  
pay ;

These you must reverence, and the rest—  
you may.'

Law was design'd to keep a state in peace ;  
To punish robbery, that wrong might cease ;  
To be impregnable ; a constant fort,  
To which the weak and injured might resort :  
But these perverted minds its force employ,  
Not to protect mankind, but to annoy ;  
And long as ammunition can be found,  
Its lightning flashes and its thunders sound.

Or law with lawyers is an ample still,  
Wrought by the passions' heat with chymic  
skill ;

While the fire burns, the gains are quickly  
made,

And freely flow the profits of the trade ;  
Nay, when the fierceness fails, these artists  
blow

The dying fire, and make the embers glow,  
As long as they can make the smaller profits  
flow ;

At length the process of itself will stop,  
When they perceive they've drawn out every  
drop.

Yet I repeat, there are, who nobly strive  
To keep the sense of moral worth alive ;  
Men who would starve, ere meanly deign to live  
On what deception and chican'ry give ;  
And these at length succeed ; they have their  
strife,

Their apprehensions, stops, and rubs in life ;  
But honour, application, care, and skill,  
Shall bend opposing fortune to their will.

Of such is Archer, he who keeps in awe  
Contending parties by his threats of law :  
He, roughly honest, has been long a guide  
In Borough-business, on the conquering side ;  
And seen so much of both sides, and so long,  
He thinks the bias of man's mind goes wrong :  
Thus, though he's friendly, he is still severe  
Surly though kind, suspiciously sincere :

So much he's seen of baseness in the mind,  
That, while a friend to man, he scorns man-  
kind ;

He knows the human heart, and sees with  
dread,

By slight temptation, how the strong are led ;  
He knows how interest can asunder rend  
The bond of parent, master, guardian, friend,  
To form a new and a degrading tie

'Twixt needy vice and tempting villany.  
Sound in himself, yet when such flaws appear,  
He doubts of all, and learns that self to fear :

For where so dark the moral view is grown,  
A timid conscience trembles for her own ;  
The pitchy taint of general vice is such  
As daubs the fancy, and you dread the touch.

Far unlike him was one in former times,  
Famed for the spoil he gather'd by his crimes ;  
Who, while his brethren nibbling held their  
prey,

He like an eagle seized and bore the whole  
away.

Swallow, a poor attorney, brought his boy  
Up at his desk, and gave him his employ ;  
He would have bound him to an honest trade,  
Could preparations have been duly made.

The clerkship ended, both the sire and son  
Together did what business could be done ;  
Sometimes they'd luck to stir up small dis-  
putes

Among their friends, and raise them into suits:  
Though close and hard, the father was content  
With this resource, now old and indolent :

But his young Swallow, gaping and alive  
To fiercer feelings, was resolved to thrive :—  
' Father,' he said, ' but little can they win,

Who hunt in couples where the game is thin ;  
Let's part in peace, and each pursue his gain  
Where it may start—our love may yet  
remain.'

The parent growl'd, he couldn't think that  
love

Made the young cockatrice his den remove ;  
But, taught by habit, he the truth suppress'd,  
Forced a frank look, and said he ' thought it  
best.'

Not long they'd parted ere dispute arose ;  
The game they hunted quickly made them  
foes :

Some house, the father by his art had won,  
Seem'd a fit cause of contest to the son,  
Who raised a claimant, and then found a way  
By a stanch witness to secure his prey.

The people cursed him, but in times of need  
Trusted in one so certain to succeed :  
By law's dark by-ways he had stored his mind  
With wicked knowledge, how to cheat man-  
kind.

Few are the freeholds in our ancient town ;  
A copy-right from heir to heir came down,  
From whence some heat arose, when there  
was doubt

In point of heirship ; but the fire went out,  
Till our attorney had the art to raise  
The dying spark, and blow it to a blaze :  
For this he now began his friends to treat ;  
His way to starve them was to make them eat,  
And drink oblivious draughts—to his ap-  
plause

It must be said, he never starved a cause ;  
He'd roast and boil'd upon his board ; the  
boast

Of half his victims was his boil'd and roast ;  
And these at every hour :—he seldom took  
Aside his client, till he'd praised his cook ;  
Nor to an office led him, there in pain  
To give his story and go out again ;  
But first, the brandy and the chine were seen,  
And then the business came by starts be-  
tween.

' Well, if 'tis so, the house to you belongs ;  
But have you money to redress these wrongs ?  
Nay, look not sad, my friend ; if you're cor-  
rect,  
You'll find the friendship that you'd not  
expect.'

If right the man, the house was Swallow's  
own ;

If wrong, his kindness and good-will were  
shown :

' Rogue ! ' ' Villain ! ' ' Scoundrel ! ' cried  
the losers all ;

He let them cry, for what would that recall ?  
At length he left us, took a village seat,  
And like a vulture look'd abroad for meat ;  
The Borough-booty, give it all its praise,  
Had only served the appetite to raise ;  
But if from simple heirs he drew their land,  
He might a noble feast at will command ;  
Still he proceeded by his former rules,  
His bait, their pleasures, when he fish'd for  
fools ;—

Flags and haunches on his board were  
placed,

And subtle avarice look'd like thoughtless  
waste :

Most of his friends, though youth from him  
had fled,

Were young, were minors, of their sires in  
dread ;

Or those whom widow'd mothers kept in  
bounds,

And check'd their generous rage for steeds  
and hounds ;

Or such as travell'd 'cross the land to view  
A Christian's conflict with a boxing Jew :  
Some too had run upon Newmarket heath  
With so much speed that they were out of  
breath ;

Others had tasted claret, till they now  
To humbler port would turn, and knew not  
how.

All these for favours would to Swallow run,  
Who never sought their thanks for all he'd  
done ;

He kindly took them by the hand, then bow'd  
Politely low, and thus his love avow'd—  
(For he'd a way that many judged polite,  
A cunning dog—he'd fawn before he'd bite)—  
' Observe, my friends, the frailty of our  
race

When age unmans us—let me state a case :  
There's our friend Rupert—we shall soon  
redress

His present evil—drink to our success—  
I flatter not ; but did you ever see  
Limbs better turn'd ? a prettier boy than he ?  
His senses all acute, his passions such  
As nature gave—she never does too much ;  
His the bold wish the cup of joy to drain,  
And strength to bear it without qualm or pain.

' Now view his father as he dozing lies,  
Whose senses wake not when he opes his eyes ;  
Who slips and shuffles when he means to walk,  
And lisps and gabbles if he tries to talk ;  
Feeling he's none, he could as soon destroy  
The earth itself, as aught it holds enjoy ;  
A nurse attends him to lay straight his limbs,  
Present his gruel, and respect his whims :  
Now shall this dotard from our hero hold  
His lands and lordships ? Shall he hide his  
gold ?

That which he cannot use, and dare not show,  
And will not give—why longer should he owe ?  
Yet, 'twould be murder should we snap the  
locks,

And take the thing he worships from the box ;  
So let him dote and dream : but, till he die,  
Shall not our generous heir receive supply ?

For ever sitting on the river's brink,  
And ever thirsty, shall he fear to drink ?  
The means are simple, let him only wish,  
Then say he 's willing, and I'll fill his dish.'

They all applauded, and not least the boy,  
Who now replied, 'It fill'd his heart with  
joy

To find he needed not deliverance crave  
Of death, or wish the justice in the grave ;  
Who, while he spent, would every art retain  
Of luring home the scatter'd gold again ;  
Just as a fountain gaily spirts and plays  
With what returns in still and secret ways.'

Short was the dream of bliss ; he quickly  
found,

His father's acres all were Swallow's ground.  
Yet to those arts would other heroes lend  
A willing ear, and Swallow was their friend ;  
Ever successful, some began to think  
That Satan help'd him to his pen and ink ;  
And shrewd suspicions ran about the place,  
'There was a compact'—I must leave the  
case.

But of the parties, had the fiend been one,  
The business could not have been speedier  
done :

Still when a man has angled day and night,  
The silliest gudgeons will refuse to bite :  
So Swallow tried no more ; but if they came  
To seek his friendship, that remain'd the  
same :

Thus he retired in peace, and some would  
say

He'd balk'd his partner, and had learn'd to  
pray.

To this some zealots lent an ear, and sought  
How Swallow felt, then said 'a change is  
wrought :

'Twas true there wanted all the signs of grace,  
But there were strong professions in their  
place ;

Then too, the less that men from him expect,  
The more the praise to the converting sect ;  
He had not yet subscribed to all their creed,  
Nor own'd a call, but he confess'd the need :  
His acquiescent speech, his gracious look,  
That pure attention, when the brethren spoke,  
Was all contrition,—he had felt the wound,  
And with confession would again be sound.

True, Swallow's board had still the sump-  
tuous treat ;

But could they blame ? the warmest zealots  
eat :

He drank—'twas needful his poor nerves to  
brace ;

He swore—'twas habit ; he was grieved—  
'twas grace :

What could they do a new-born zeal to nurse ?  
'His wealth 's undoubted—let him hold our  
purse ;

He'll add his bounty, and the house we'll raise  
Hard by the church, and gather all her  
strays ;

We'll watch her sinners as they home retire,  
And pluck the brands from the devouring  
fire.'

Alas ! such speech was but an empty  
boast ;

The good men reckon'd, but without their  
host ;

Swallow, delighted, took the trusted store,  
And own'd the sum : they did not ask for  
more,

Till more was needed ; when they call'd for  
aid—

And had it ?—No, their agent was afraid ;  
'Could he but know to whom he should  
refund,

He would most gladly—nay, he'd go beyond ;  
But when such numbers claim'd, when some  
were gone,

And others going—he must hold it on ;  
The Lord would help them'—Loud their  
anger grew,

And while they threat'ning from his door  
withdrew,

He bow'd politely low, and bade them all  
adieu.

But lives the man by whom such deeds are  
done ?

Yes, many such—but Swallow's race is run ;  
His name is lost,—for though his sons have  
name,

It is not his, they all escape the shame ;  
Nor is there vestige now of all he had,  
His means are wasted, for his heir was mad :  
Still we of Swallow as a monster speak,  
A hard bad man, who prey'd upon the weak.

## LETTER VII. PROFESSIONS—PHYSIC

Iam mala finissem leto, sed credula vitam  
 Spes fovet, et fore cras semper ait melius.  
 TIBULLUS, lib. ii. vi, vv. 20, 21.

He fell to juggle, cant, and cheat—  
 For as those fowls that live in water  
 Are never wet, he did but smatter ;  
 Whate'er he labour'd to appear,  
 His understanding still was clear.

A paltry wretch he had, half-starved,  
 That him in place of zany served.  
 BUTLER'S *Hudibras*, Part II, Canto III,  
 218-222, 323, 324.

The Worth and Excellence of the true Physician—Merit, not the sole Cause of Success—Modes of advancing Reputation—Motives of medical Men for publishing their Works—The great Evil of Quackery—Present State of advertising Quacks—Their Hazard—Some fail, and why—Causes of Success—How men of Understanding are prevailed upon to have Recourse to Empirics, and to permit their Names to be advertised—Evils of Quackery : to nervous Females : to Youth : to Infants—History of an advertising Empiric, &c.

NEXT, to a graver tribe we turn our view,  
 And yield the praise to worth and science due ;  
 But this with serious words and sober style,  
 For these are friends with whom we seldom smile :

Helpers of men\* they're call'd, and we confess  
 Theirs the deep study, theirs the lucky guess ;  
 We own that numbers join with care and skill,  
 A temperate judgment, a devoted will ;  
 Men who suppress their feelings, but who feel  
 The painful symptoms they delight to heal ;  
 Patient in all their trials, they sustain  
 The starts of passion, the reproach of pain ;  
 With hearts affected, but with looks serene,  
 Intent they wait through all the solemn scene ;

Glad if a hope should rise from nature's strife,  
 To aid their skill and save the lingering life ;  
 But this must virtue's generous effort be,  
 And spring from nobler motives than a fee :  
 To the physicians of the soul, and these,  
 Turn the distress'd for safety, hope, and ease.

\* Opifere per orbem dicor.

But as physicians of that nobler kind  
 Have their warm zealots, and their sectaries  
 blind ;

So among these for knowledge most renown'd,  
 Are dreamers strange, and stubborn bigots  
 found :

Some, too, admitted to this honour'd name,  
 Have, without learning, found a way to fame ;  
 And some by learning—young physicians  
 write,

To set their merit in the fairest light ;  
 With them a treatise is a bait that draws  
 Approving voices—'tis to gain applause,  
 And to exalt them in the public view,  
 More than a life of worthy toil could do.  
 When 'tis proposed to make the man re-  
 nown'd,

In every age, convenient doubts abound ;  
 Convenient themes in every period start,  
 Which he may treat with all the pomp of art ;  
 Curious conjectures he may always make,  
 And either side of dubious questions take :  
 He may a system broach, or, if he please,  
 Start new opinions of an old disease ;  
 Or may some simple in the woodland trace,  
 And be its patron, till it runs its race ;  
 As rustic damsels from their woods are won,  
 And live in splendour till their race be run ;  
 It weighs not much on what their powers be  
 shown,

When all his purpose is to make them known.  
 To show the world what long experience  
 gains,

Requires not courage, though it calls for pains ;  
 But at life's outset to inform mankind,  
 Is a bold effort of a valiant mind.

The great good man, for noblest cause,  
 displays

What many labours taught, and many days ;  
 These sound instruction from experience  
 give,

The others show us how they mean to live ;  
 That they have genius, and they hope man-  
 kind

Will to its efforts be no longer blind.

There are beside, whom powerful friends  
 advance,  
 Whom fashion favours, person, patrons,  
 chance :

And merit sighs to see a fortune made  
By daring rashness or by dull parade.

But these are trifling evils ; there is one  
Which walks unchecked'd, and triumphs in the  
sun :

There was a time, when we beheld the quack,  
On public stage, the licensed trade attack ;  
He made his labour'd speech with poor  
parade ;

And then a laughing zany lent him aid :  
Smiling we pass'd him, but we felt the while  
Pity so much, that soon we ceased to smile ;  
Assured that fluent speech and flow'ry vest  
Disguised the troubles of a man distress'd.

But now our quacks are gamesters, and they  
play  
With craft and skill to ruin and betray ;  
With monstrous promise they delude the  
mind,

And thrive on all that tortures human-kind.  
Void of all honour, avaricious, rash,  
The daring tribe compound their boasted  
trash—

Tincture or syrup, lotion, drop or pill ;  
All tempt the sick to trust the lying bill ;  
And twenty names of cobblers turn'd to  
squires,

And the bold language of these blushless liars.  
There are among them those who cannot  
read,

And yet they'll buy a patent, and succeed ;  
Will dare to promise dying sufferers aid,  
For who, when dead, can threaten or up-  
braid ?

With cruel avarice still they recommend  
More draughts, more syrup to the journey's  
end :

' I feel it not ; '— ' Then take it every hour : '

' It makes me worse ; '— ' Why then it shows  
its power : '

' I fear to die ; '— ' Let not your spirits sink,  
You're always safe, while you believe and  
drink.'

How strange to add, in this nefarious trade,  
That men of parts are dupes by dunces made :

That creatures, nature meant should clean our  
streets,  
Have purchased lands and mansions, parks  
and seats ;  
Wretches with consciences so obtuse, they leave  
Their untaught sons their parents to deceive ;  
And when they're laid upon their dying-bed,  
No thought of murder comes into their head ;

Nor one revengeful ghost to them appears,  
To fill the soul with penitential fears.

Yet not the whole of this imposing train  
Their gardens, seats, and carriages obtain ;  
Chiefly, indeed, they to the robbers fall,  
Who are most fitted to disgrace them all :  
But there is hazard—patents must be bought,  
Venders and puffers for the poison sought ;  
And then in many a paper through the year,  
Must cures and cases, oaths and proofs ap-  
pear ;

Men snatch'd from graves, as they were  
dropping in,  
Their lungs cough'd up, their bones pierced  
through their skin ;

Their liver all one scirrhus, and the frame  
Poison'd with evils which they dare not name ;  
Men who spent all upon physicians' fees,  
Who never slept, nor had a moment's ease,  
Are now as roaches sound, and all as brisk as  
bees.

If the sick gudgeons to the bait attend,  
And come in shoals, the angler gains his end ;  
But should the advertising cash be spent,  
Ere yet the town has due attention lent,  
Then bursts the bubble, and the hungry cheat  
Pines for the bread he ill deserves to eat ;  
It is a lottery, and he shares perhaps  
The rich man's feast, or begs the pauper's  
scraps.

From powerful causes spring th' empiric's  
gains,  
Man's love of life, his weakness, and his pains ;  
These first induce him the vile trash to try,  
Then lend his name, that other men may  
buy :

This love of life, which in our nature rules,  
To vile imposture makes us dupes and tools ;  
Then pain compels th' impatient soul to seize  
On promis'd hopes of instantaneous ease ;  
And weakness too with every wish complies,  
Worn out and won by importunities.

Troubled with something in your bile or  
blood, •

You think your doctor does you little good ;  
And, grown impatient, you require in haste  
The nervous cordial, nor dislike the taste ;  
It comforts, heals, and strengthens ; nay,  
you think

It makes you better every time you drink ;  
' Then lend your name '—you're loth, but  
yet confess

Its powers are great, and so you acquiesce :

Yet think a moment, ere your name you lend,  
With whose 'tis placed, and what you recom-  
mend ;

Who tipples brandy will some comfort feel,  
But will he to the med'cine set his seal ?  
Wait, and you'll find the cordial you admire  
Has added fuel to your fever's fire :

Say, should a robber chance your purse to  
spare,

Would you the honour of the man declare ?  
Would you assist his purpose ? swell his  
crime ?

Besides, he might not spare a second time.

Compassion sometimes sets the fatal sign ;  
The man was poor, and humbly begg'd a  
line ;

Else how should noble names and titles back  
The spreading praise of some advent'rous  
quack ?

But he the moment watches, and entreats  
Your honour's name,—your honour joins the  
cheats ;

You judged the med'cine harmless, and you  
lent

What help you could, and with the best intent ;  
But can it please you, thus to league with all  
Whom he can beg or bribe to swell the scrawl ?  
Would you these wrappers with your name  
adorn,

Which hold the poison for the yet unborn ?

No class escapes them—from the poor  
man's pay,

The nostrum takes no trifling part away ;  
See ! those square patent bottles from the  
shop,

Now decoration to the cupboard's top ;  
And there a favourite hoard you'll find within,  
Companions meet ! the julep and the gin.

Time too with cash is wasted ; 'tis the fate  
Of real helpers to be call'd too late ;  
This find the sick, when (time and patience  
gone)

Death with a tenfold terror hurries on.

Suppose the case surpasses human skill,  
There comes a quack to flatter weakness still ;  
What greater evil can a flatterer do,  
Than from himself to take the sufferer's view ?  
To turn from sacred thoughts his reasoning  
powers,

And rob a sinner of his dying hours ?

Yet this they dare, and craving to the last,  
In hope's strong bondage hold their victim  
fast :

For soul or body no concern have they,  
All their inquiry, ' Can the patient pay ?  
And will he swallow draughts until his dying  
day ? '

Observe what ills to nervous females flow,  
When the heart flutters, and the pulse is low ;  
If once induced these cordial sips to try,  
All feel the ease, and few the danger fly ;  
For while obtain'd, of drams they've all the  
force,

And when denied, then drams are the resource.

Nor these the only evils—there are those  
Who for the troubled mind prepare repose ;  
They write : the young are tenderly address'd,  
Much danger hinted, much concern express'd ;  
They dwell on freedom lads are prone to take,  
Which makes the doctor tremble for their  
sake ;

Still if the youthful patient will but trust

In one so kind, so pitiful, and just ;

If he will take the tonic all the time,

And hold but moderate intercourse with  
crime ;

The sage will gravely give his honest word,  
That strength and spirits shall be both re-  
stored ;

In plainer English—if you mean to sin,  
Fly to the drops, and instantly begin.

Who would not lend a sympathizing sigh,  
To hear yon infant's pity-moving cry ?

That feeble sob, unlike the new-born note,  
Which came with vigour from the op'ning  
throat ;

When air and light first rush'd on lungs and  
eyes,

And there was life and spirit in the cries ;

Now an abortive, faint attempt to weep

Is all we hear ; sensation is asleep :

The boy was healthy, and at first express'd  
His feelings loudly, when he fail'd to rest ;  
When cramm'd with food, and tighten'd  
every limb,

To cry aloud, was what pertain'd to him ;

Then the good nurse, (who, had she borne  
a brain,

Had sought the cause that made her babe  
complain,)

Has all her efforts, loving soul ! applied,

To set the cry, and not the cause, aside ;

She gave her powerful sweet without remorse,

*The sleeping cordial*—she had tried its force,

Repeating oft : the infant freed from pain,

Rejected food, but took the dose again,



Sinking to sleep ; while she her joy express'd,  
That her dear charge could sweetly take his  
rest :

Soon may she spare her cordial ; not a doubt  
Remains, but quickly he will rest without.

This moves our grief and pity, and we sigh  
To think what numbers from these causes  
die ;

But what contempt and anger should we show,  
Did we the lives of these impostors know !

Ere for the world's I left the cares of school,  
One I remember who assumed the fool :  
A part well suited—when the idler boys  
Would shout around him, and he loved the  
noise ;

They call'd him Neddy ;—Neddy had the art  
To play with skill his ignominious part ;  
When he his trifles would for sale display,  
And act the mimic for a schoolboy's pay.  
For many years he plied his humble trade,  
And used his tricks and talents to persuade ;  
The fellow barely read, but chanced to look  
Among the fragments of a tatter'd book ;  
Where after many efforts made to spell  
One puzzling word, he found it *oxymel* ;  
A potent thing, 'twas said, to cure the ills  
Of ailing lungs—the *oxymel of squills* :  
Squills he procured, but found the bitter  
strong,

And most unpleasant ; none would take it  
long ;

But the pure acid and the sweet would  
make

A medicine numbers would for pleasure take.

There was a fellow near, an artful knave,  
Who knew the plan, and much assistance  
gave ;

He wrote the puffs, and every talent plied  
To make it sell : it sold, and then he died.

Now all the profit fell to Ned's control,  
And Pride and Avarice quarrell'd for his  
soul ;

When mighty profits by the trash were made,  
Pride built a palace, Avarice groan'd and  
paid ;

Pride placed the signs of grandeur all about,  
And Avarice barr'd his friends and children  
out.

Now see him doctor ! yes, the idle fool,  
The butt, the robber of the lads at school ;

Who then knew *nothing*, *nothing* since ac-  
quired,

Became a doctor, honour'd and admired ;  
His dress, his frown, his dignity were such,  
Some who had known him thought his know-  
ledge much ;

Nay, men of skill, of apprehension quick,  
Spite of their knowledge, trusted him when  
sick :

Though he could neither reason, write, nor  
spell,

They yet had hope his trash would make  
them well ;

And while they scorn'd his parts, they took  
his oxymel.

Oh ! when his nerves had once received a  
shock,

Sir Isaac Newton might have gone to Rock : \*  
Hence impositions of the grossest kind,  
Hence thought is feeble, understanding blind ;  
Hence sums enormous by those cheats are  
made,  
And deaths unnumber'd by their dreadful  
trade.

Alas ! in vain is my contempt express'd,  
To stronger passions are their words address'd ;  
To pain, to fear, to terror their appeal,  
To those who, weakly reasoning, strongly  
feel.

What then our hopes ?—perhaps there  
may by law

Be method found, these pests to curb and  
awe ;

Yet in this land of freedom, law is slack  
With any being to commence attack ;  
Then let us trust to science—there are those  
Who can their falsehoods and their frauds  
disclose,

All their vile trash detect, and their low  
tricks expose :

Perhaps their numbers may in time confound  
Their arts—as scorpions give themselves the  
wound :

For when these curers dwell in every place,  
While of the cured we not a man can trace,  
Strong truth may then the public mind per-  
suade,

And spoil the fruits of this nefarious trade.

\* An empiric who *flourished* at the same time  
with this great man.

## LETTER VIII. TRADES

Non possidentem multa vocaveris  
 Recte beatum : rectius occupat  
 Nomen Beati, qui Deorum  
 Muneribus sapienter uti,  
 Duramque callet pauperiem pati.

HOR. *Carm. lib. iv, 9, vv. 45-49.*

Non uxor saluum te vult, non filius : omnes  
 Vicini oderunt ; noti, pueri atque puellae.  
 Miraris, cum tu argento post omnia ponas,  
 Si nemo praestet, quem non merearis,  
 amorem ?

HOR. *Sat. lib. i, Sat. i, vv. 84-7.*

Non propter vitam faciunt patrimonia quidam,

Sed vitio cacci propter patrimonia vivunt.

JUVENAL, *Sat. xii, vv. 50, 51.*

No extensive Manufactories in the Borough :  
 yet considerable Fortunes made there—Ill  
 Judgment of Parents in disposing of their  
 Sons—The best educated not the most  
 likely to succeed—Instance—Want of  
 Success compensated by the lenient Power  
 of some Avocations—The Naturalist—  
 The Weaver an Entomologist, &c.—A  
 Prize-Flower—Story of Walter and William.

Of manufactures, trade, inventions rare,  
 Steam-towers and looms, you'd know our  
 Borough's share—

'Tis small : we boast not these rich subjects  
 here,

Who hazard thrice ten thousand pounds a  
 year ;

We've no huge buildings, where incessant  
 noise

Is made by springs and spindles, girls and  
 boys ;

Where, 'mid such thundering sounds, the  
 maiden's song

Is ' Harmony in Uproar ' ' all day long.

Still common minds with us in common  
 trade,

Have gain'd more wealth than ever student  
 made ;

And yet a merchant, when he gives his son  
 His college-learning, thinks his duty done ;

A way to wealth he leaves his boy to find.

Just when he's made for the discovery blind.

Jones and his wife perceived their elder  
 boy

Took to his learning, and it gave them joy ;

This they encouraged, and were bless'd to see  
 Their son a fellow with a high degree ;  
 A living fell, he married, and his sire  
 Declared 'twas all a father could require ;  
 Children then bless'd them, and when letters  
 came,

The parents proudly told each grandchild's  
 name.

Meantime the sons at home in trade were  
 placed,

Money their object—just the father's taste ;  
 Saving he lived and long, and when he died,  
 He gave them all his fortune to divide :

' Martin,' said he, ' at vast expense was  
 taught ;

He gain'd his wish, and has the ease he  
 sought.'

Thus the good priest (the Christian-  
 scholar !) finds

What estimate is made by vulgar minds ;

He sees his brothers, who had every gift  
 Of thriving, now assisted in their thrift ;

While he whom learning, habits, all prevent,  
 Is largely mulct for each impediment.

Yet let us own that trade has much of  
 chance,

Not all the careful by their care advance ;  
 With the same parts and prospects, one a seat  
 Builds for himself ; one finds it in the Fleet.

Then to the wealthy you will see denied  
 Comforts and joys that with the poor abide :

There are who labour through the year, and  
 yet

No more have gain'd than—not to be in  
 debt ;

Who still maintain the same laborious course,  
 Yet pleasure hails them from some favourite

source ;

And health, amusements, children, wife or  
 friend,

With life's dull views their consolations blend.

Nor these alone possess the lenient power  
 Of soothing life in the desponding hour ;

Some favourite studies, some delightful care,  
 The mind, with trouble and distresses, share ;

And by a coin, a flower, a verse, a boat,  
 The stagnant spirits have been set afloat ;

They pleased at first, and then the habit grew,  
 Till the fond heart no higher pleasure knew ;

Till, from all cares and other comforts freed,  
Th' important nothing took in life the lead.

With all his phlegm, it broke a Dutchman's  
heart,

At a vast price, with one loved root to part ;  
And toys like these fill many a British mind,  
Although their hearts are found of firmer  
kind.

Oft have I smiled the happy pride to see  
Of humble tradesmen, in their evening glee ;  
When of some pleasing, fancied good pos-  
sess'd,

Each grew alert, was busy, and was bless'd ;  
Whether the call-bird yield the hour's delight,  
Or, magnified in microscope, the mite ;  
Or whether tumbler, croppers, carriers seize  
The gentle mind, they rule it and they please.

There is my friend the Weaver ; strong  
desires

Reign in his breast ; 'tis beauty he admires :  
See ! to the shady grove he wings his way,  
And feels in hope the raptures of the day—  
Eager he looks ; and soon, to glad his eyes,  
From the sweet bower, by nature form'd,  
arise

Bright troops of virgin moths and fresh-born  
butterflies ;

Who broke that morning from their half-  
year's sleep,

To fly o'er flow'rs where they were wont to  
creep.

Above the sovereign oak, a sovereign skims,  
The purple Emp'r, strong in wing and  
limbs :

There fair Camilla takes her flight serene,  
Adonis blue, and Paphia silver-queen ;  
With every filmy fly from mead or bower,  
And hungry Sphinx who threads the honey'd  
flower ;

She o'er the Larkspur's bed, where sweets  
abound,

Views ev'ry bell, and hums th' approving  
sound ;

Poised on her busy plumes, with feeling nice  
She draws from every flower, nor tries a flet  
twice.

He fears no bailiff's wrath, no baron's blame,  
His is untax'd and undisputed game ;  
Nor less the place of curious plant he knows ;  
He both his Flora and his Fauna shows ;  
For him is blooming in its rich array  
The glorious flower which bore the palm  
away ;

In vain a rival tried his utmost art,  
His was the prize, and joy o'erflow'd his heart.

' This, this ! is beauty ; cast, I pray, your  
eyes

On this my glory ! see the grace ! the size !  
Was ever stem so tall, so stout, so strong,  
Exact in breadth, in just proportion, long !  
These brilliant hues are all distinct and clean,  
No kindred tint, no blending streaks between ;  
This is no shaded, run-off<sup>3</sup> pin-eyed<sup>4</sup> thing,  
A king of flowers, a flower for England's  
king :

I own my pride, and thank the favouring star,  
Which shed such beauty on my fair Bizarre."<sup>5</sup>

Thus may the poor the cheap indulgence  
seize,

While the most wealthy pine and pray for  
ease ;

Content not always waits upon success,  
And more may he enjoy who profits less.

Walter and William took (their father dead)  
Jointly the trade to which they both were  
bred ;

When fix'd, they married, and they quickly  
found

With due success their honest labours crown'd :  
Few were their losses, but although a few,  
Walter was vex'd, and somewhat peevish  
grew :

' You put your trust in every pleading fool,'  
Said he to William, and grew strange and cool.

' Brother, forbear,' he answer'd ; ' take your  
due,

Nor let my lack of caution injure you ; '

Half friends they parted,—better so to close,  
Than longer wait to part entirely foes.

Walter had knowledge, prudence, jealous  
care ;

He let no idle views his bosom share ;

He never thought nor felt for other men—

' Let one mind one, and all are minded then.'

Friends he respected, and believed them just,  
But they were men, and he would no man  
trust ;

He tried and watch'd his people day and  
night,—

The good it harm'd not ; for the bad 'twas  
right :

He could their humours bear, nay disrespect,  
But he could yield no pardon to neglect ;

That all about him were of him afraid,  
' Was right,' he said—' so should we be  
obey'd.'

These merchant-maxims, much good-fortune too,

And ever keeping one grand point in view,  
To vast amount his once small portion drew.

William was kind and easy; he complied  
With all requests, or grieved when he denied;  
To please his wife he made a costly trip,  
To please his child he let a bargain slip;  
Prone to compassion, mild with the distress'd,  
He bore with all who poverty profess'd,  
And some would he assist, nor one would he arrest.

He had some loss at sea, bad debts at land,  
His clerk absconded with some bills in hand,  
And plans so often fail'd that he no longer plann'd.

To a small house (his brother's) he withdrew,  
At easy rent—the man was not a Jew;  
And there his losses and his cares he bore,  
Nor found that want of wealth could make him poor.

No, he in fact was rich; nor could he move,  
But he was follow'd by the looks of love;  
All he had suffer'd, every former grief,  
Made those around more studious in relief;  
He saw a cheerful smile in every face,  
And lost all thoughts of error and disgrace.

Pleasant it was to see them in their walk  
Round their small garden, and to hear them talk;

Free are their children, but their love refrains  
From all offence—none murmurs, none complains;

Whether a book amused them, speech or play,  
Their looks were lively, and their hearts were gay;

There no forced efforts for delight were made,  
Joy came with prudence, and without parade;  
Their common comforts they had all in view,  
Light were their troubles, and their wishes few:  
Thrift made them easy for the coming day,  
Religion took the dread of death away;  
A cheerful spirit still insured content,  
And love smiled round them wheresoe'er they went.

Walter, meantime, with all his wealth's increase,  
Gain'd many points, but could not purchase peace;

When he withdrew from business for an hour,  
Some fled his presence, all confess'd his power;  
He sought affection, but received instead  
Fear undisguised, and love-repelling dread;

He look'd around him—'Harriet, dost thou love?'

'I do my duty,' said the timid dove;

'Good Heav'n, your duty! prithee, tell me now—'

To love and honour—was not that your vow?  
Come, my good Harriet, I would gladly seek  
Your inmost thought—Why can't the woman speak?

Have you not all things?—'Sir, do I complain?—'

'No, that's my part, which I perform in vain;  
I want a simple answer, and direct—  
But you evade; yes! 'tis as I suspect.

Come then, my children! Watt! upon your knees

Vow that you love me.'—'Yes, sir, if you please.'—

'Again! by Heav'n, it mads me; I require  
Love, and they'll do whatever I desire:

Thus too my people shun me; I would spend  
A thousand pounds to get a single friend;

I would be happy—I have means to pay  
For love and friendship, and you run away;

Ungrateful creatures! why, you seem to dread  
My very looks; I know you wish me dead.

Come hither, Nancy! you must hold me dear;  
Hither, I say; why! what have you to fear?

You see I'm gentle—Come, you trifler, come;  
My God! she trembles! Idiot, leave the room!

Madam! your children hate me; I suppose  
They know their cue: you make them all my

foes;

I've not a friend in all the world—not one:  
I'd be a bankrupt sooner; nay, 'tis done;

In every better hope of life I fail,  
You're all tormentors, and my house a jail;

Out of my sight! I'll sit and make my will—  
What, glad to go? stay, devils, and be still;

'Tis to your uncle's cot you wish to run,  
To learn to live at ease and be undone;

Him you can love, who lost his whole estate,  
And I, who gain you fortunes, have your hate;

'Tis in my absence, you yourselves enjoy:  
Tom! are you glad to lose me? tell me, boy:

Yes! does he answer?—'Yes! upon my soul;'

'No awe, no fear, no duty, no control!

Away! away! ten thousand devils seize

All I possess, and plunder where they please!  
What's wealth to me?—yes, yes! it gives

me sway,  
And you shall feel it—Go! begone, I say.'

## LETTER IX. AMUSEMENTS

Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis,  
Ut possis animo quemvis sufferre laborem.  
CATULL. lib. iii.

. . . Nostra fatescitur  
Laxaturque chelys, vires instigat alitque  
Tempestiva quies, major post otia virtus.

STATIUS, *Sylv.* lib. iv. 4, vv. 32-34.  
Iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen  
habebant;

Omnia pontus erant: deerant quoque littora  
ponto.

OVID, *Metamorph.* lib. i, vv. 291, 292.

Common Amusements of a Bathing-place  
—Morning Rides, Walks, &c.—Company  
resorting to the Town—Different Choice  
of Lodgings—Cheap Indulgences—Sea-  
side Walks—Wealthy Invalid—Summer-  
Evening on the Sands—Sea Productions—  
'Water parted from the Sea'—Winter  
Views serene—In what Cases to be avoided  
—Sailing upon the River—A small Islet  
of Sand off the Coast—Visited by Company  
—Covered by the Flowing of the Tide—  
Adventure in that Place.

Of our amusements ask you?—We amuse  
Ourselves and friends with sea-side walks and  
views,

Or take a morning ride, a novel, or the news;  
Or, seeking nothing, glide about the street,  
And so engaged, with various parties meet;  
Awhile we stop, discourse of wind and tide,  
Bathing and books, the raffle, and the ride,  
Thus, with the aid which shops and sailing  
give,

Life passes on; 'tis labour, but we live.

When evening comes, our invalids awake,  
Nerves cease to tremble, heads forbear to ache;  
Then cheerful meals the sunken spirits raise,  
Cards or the dance, wine, visiting, or plays.

Soon as the season comes, and crowds arrive,  
To their superior rooms the wealthy drive;  
Others look round for lodging snug and small,  
Such is their taste—they've hatred to a hall;  
Hence one his fav'rite habitation gets,  
The brick-floor'd parlour which the butcher  
lets;

Where, through his single light, he may regard  
The various business of a common yard,  
Bounded by backs of buildings form'd of clay,  
By stable, sties, and coops, et-cætera.

The needy-vain, themselves awhile to shun,  
For dissipation to these dog-holes run;  
Where each (assuming petty pomp) appears,  
And quite forgets the shopboard and the  
shears.

For them are cheap amusements: they  
may slip

Beyond the town and take a private dip;  
When they may urge that to be safe they  
mean,

They've heard there's danger in a light  
machine;

They too can gratis move the quays about,  
And gather kind replies to every doubt;  
There they a pacing, lounging tribe may view,  
The stranger's guides, who've little else to do;  
The Borough's placemen, where no more they  
gain

Than keeps them idle, civil, poor, and vain.  
Then may the poorest with the wealthy look  
On ocean, glorious page of Nature's book!  
May see its varying views in every hour,  
All softness now, then rising with all power,  
As sleeping to invite, or threat'ning to devour:  
'Tis this which gives us all our choicest views;  
Its waters heal us, and its shores amuse.

See! those fair nymphs upon that rising  
strand,

Yon long salt lake has parted from the land;  
Well pleased to press that path, so clean, so  
pure,

To seem in danger, yet to feel secure;  
Trifling with terror, while they strive to shun  
The curling billows; laughing as they run;  
They know the neck that joins the shore and  
sea;

Or, ah! how changed that fearless laugh  
would be.

Observe how various parties take their way,  
By sea-side walks, or make the sand-hills gay;  
There group'd are laughing maids and sighing  
swains,

And some apart who feel unpitied pains;  
Pains from diseases, pains which those who  
feel,

To the physician, not the fair, reveal:  
For nymphs (propitious to the lover's sigh)  
Leave these poor patients to complain and  
die.

Lo ! where on that huge anchor sadly leans  
That sick tall figure, lost in other scenes ;  
He late from India's clime impatient sail'd ;  
There, as his fortune grew, his spirits fail'd ;  
For each delight, in search of wealth he went,  
For ease alone, the wealth acquired is spent—  
And spent in vain ; enrich'd, aggrieved, he  
sees

The envied poor possess'd of joy and ease :  
And now he flies from place to place, to gain  
Strength for enjoyment, and still flies in vain :  
Mark ! with what sadness, of that pleasant  
crew,

Boist'rous in mirth, he takes a transient view ;  
And fixing then his eye upon the sea,  
Thinks what has been and what must shortly  
be :

Is it not strange that man should health  
destroy,

For joys that come when he is dead to joy ?

Now is it pleasant in the summer-eve,  
When a broad shore retiring waters leave,  
Awhile to wait upon the firm fair sand,  
When all is calm at sea, all still at land ;  
And there the ocean's produce to explore,  
As floating by, or rolling on the shore ;  
Those living jellies <sup>1</sup> which the flesh inflame,  
Fierce as a nettle, and from that its name ;  
Some in huge masses, some that you may  
bring

In the small compass of a lady's ring ;  
Figured by hand divine—there 's not a gem  
Wrought by man's art to be compared to  
them ;

Soft, brilliant, tender, through the wave they  
glow,

And make the moonbeam brighter where they  
flow.

Involved in sea-wrack, here you find a race,  
Which science doubting, knows not where to  
place ;

On shell or stone is dropp'd the embryo-  
seed,

And quickly vegetates a vital breed.<sup>2</sup>

While thus with pleasing wonder you in-  
spect

Treasures the vulgar in their scorn reject,  
See as they float along th' entangled weeds  
Slowly approach, upborne on bladdery beads ;  
Wait till they land, and you shall then behold  
The fiery sparks those tangled frons' in fold,  
Myriads of living points<sup>3</sup> ; th' unaided eye  
Can but the fire and not the form desery.

And now your view upon the ocean turn,  
And there the splendour of the waves discern ;  
Cast but a stone, or strike them with an oar,  
And you shall flames within the deep explore ;  
Or scoop the stream phosphoric as you stand,  
And the cold flames shall flash along your  
hand ;

When, lost in wonder, you shall walk and  
gaze

On weeds that sparkle, and on waves that  
blaze.<sup>4</sup>

The ocean too has winter-views serene,  
When all you see through densest fog is seen ;  
When you can hear the fishers near at hand  
Distinctly speak, yet see not where they  
stand ;

Or sometimes them and not their boat discern,  
Or half-conceal'd some figure at the stern ;  
The view's all bounded, and from side to  
side

Your utmost prospect but a few ells wide ;  
Boys who, on shore, to sea the pebble cast,  
Will hear it strike against the viewless mast ;  
While the stern boatman growls his fierce  
disdain,

At whom he knows not, whom he threatens in  
vain.

'Tis pleasant then to view the nets float  
past,

Net after net till you have seen the last ;  
And as you wait till all beyond you slip,  
A boat comes gliding from an anchor'd slip,  
Breaking the silence with the dipping oar,  
And their own tones, as labouring for the  
shore ;

Those measured tones which with the scene  
agree,

And give a sadness to serenity.

All scenes like these the tender maid should  
shun,

Nor to a misty beach in autumn run ;  
Much should she guard against the evening  
cold,

And her slight shape with fleecy warmth in-  
fold ;

This she admits, but not with so much ease  
Gives up the night-walk when th' attendants  
please :

Her have I seen, pale, vapour'd through the  
day,

With crowded parties at the midnight play ;  
Faint in the morn, no powers could she exert ;  
At night with Pam delighted and alert ;

In a small shop she 's ruffled with a crowd,  
Breathed the thick air, and cough'd and  
laugh'd aloud ;

She who will tremble if her eye explore  
' The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps  
on floor ; '

Whom the kind doctor charged with shaking  
head,

At early hour to quit the beaux for bed :  
She has, contemning fear, gone down the  
dance,

Till she perceived the rosy morn advance ;  
Then has she wonder'd, fainting o'er her tea,  
Her drops and julep should so useless be :  
Ah ! sure her joys must ravish every sense,  
Who buys a portion at such vast expense.

Among those joys, 'tis one at eve to sail  
On the broad river with a favourite gale ;  
When no rough waves upon the bosom ride,  
But the keel cuts, nor rises on the tide ;  
Safe from the stream the nearer gunwale  
stands,

Where playful children trail their idle hands :  
Or strive to catch long grassy leaves that  
float

On either side of the impeded boat ;  
What time the moon arising shows the mud,  
A shining border to the silver flood :  
When, by her dubious light, the meanest  
views,

Chalk, stones, and stakes, obtain the richest  
hues ;

And when the cattle, as they gazing stand,  
Seem nobler objects than when view'd from  
land :

Then anchor'd vessels in the way appear,  
And sea-boys greet them as they pass—  
' What cheer ? '

The sleeping shell-ducks at the sound arise,  
And utter loud their unharmonious cries ;  
Fluttering they move their weedy beds  
among,

Or instant diving, hide their plumeless young.

Along the wall, returning from the town,  
The weary rustic homeward wanders down :  
Who stops and gazes at such joyous crew,  
And feels his envy rising at the view ;  
He the light speech and laugh indignant hears,  
And feels more press'd by want, more vex'd  
by fears.

Ah ! go in peace, good fellow, to thine  
home,  
Nor fancy these escape the general doom ;

Gay as they seem, be sure with them are  
hearts

With sorrow tried ; there 's sadness in their  
parts :

If thou couldst see them when they think  
alone,

Mirth, music, friends, and these amusements  
gone ;

Couldst thou discover every secret ill  
That pains their spirit, or resists their will ;

Couldst thou behold forsaken Love's distress,  
Or Envy's pang at glory and success,  
Or Beauty, conscious of the spoils of Time,  
Or Guilt alarm'd when Memory shows the  
crime ;

All that gives sorrow, terror, grief, and  
gloom ;

Content would cheer thee trudging to thine  
home.<sup>5</sup>

There are, 'tis true, who lay their cares  
aside,

And bid some hours in calm enjoyment glide ;  
Perchance some fair-one to the sober night  
Adds (by the sweetness of her song) delight ;  
And, as the music on the water floats,  
Some bolder shore returns the soften'd notes ;  
Then, youth, beware, for all around conspire  
To banish caution and to wake desire ;

The day's amusement, feasting, beauty, wine,  
These accents sweet and this soft hour com-  
bine,

When most unguarded, then to win that heart  
of thine :

But see, they land ! the fond enchantment  
flies,

And in its place life's common views arise.  
Sometimes a party, row'd from town, will  
land

On a small islet form'd of shelly sand,  
Left by the water when the tides are low,  
But which the floods in their return o'erflow :  
There will they anchor, pleased awhile to  
view

The watery waste, a prospect wild and new ;  
The now receding billows give them space,  
On either side the growing shores to pace ;  
And then returning, they contract the scene,  
Till small and smaller grows the walk between ;  
As sea to sea approaches, shore to shores,  
Till the next ebb the sandy isle restores.

Then what alarm ! what danger and dis-  
may,

If all their trust, their boat should drift away ;

And once it happen'd—gay the friends advanced,  
 They walk'd, they ran, they play'd, they sang,  
 they danced ;  
 The urns were boiling, and the cups went round,  
 And not a grave or thoughtful face was found ;  
 On the bright sand they trod with nimble feet,  
 Dry shelly sand that made the summer-seat ;  
 The wondering mewes flew fluttering o'er the head,

And waves ran softly up their shining bed.

Some form'd a party from the rest to stray,  
 Pleased to collect the trifles in their way ;  
 These to behold they call their friends around,  
 No friends can hear, or hear another sound ;  
 Alarm'd, they hasten, yet perceive not why,  
 But catch the fear that quickens as they fly.

For lo ! a lady sage, who paced the sand  
 With her fair children, one in either hand,  
 Intent on home, had turn'd, and saw the boat  
 Slipp'd from her moorings, and now far afloat ;

She gazed, she trembled, and though faint her call,  
 It seem'd, like thunder, to confound them all.  
 Their sailor-guides, the boatman and his mate,

Had drank, and slept regardless of their state ;  
 'Awake !' they cried aloud ; 'Alarm the shore !

Shout all, or never shall we reach it more !'  
 Alas ! no shout the distant land can reach,  
 Nor eye behold them from the foggy beach :  
 Again they join in one loud powerful cry,  
 Then cease, and eager listen for reply ;  
 None came—the rising wind blew sadly by :  
 They shout once more, and then they turn aside,

To see how quickly flow'd the coming tide ;  
 Between each cry they find the waters steal  
 On their strange prison, and new horrors feel ;  
 Foot after foot on the contracted ground  
 The billows fall, and dreadful is the sound ;  
 Less and yet less the sinking isle became,  
 And there was wailing, weeping, wrath, and blame.

Had one been there, with spirit strong and high,

Who could observe, as he prepared to die,  
 He might have seen of hearts the varying kind,  
 And traced the movement of each different mind :

He might have seen, that not the gentle maid  
 Was more than stern and haughty man afraid ;  
 Such, calmly grieving, will their fears suppress,

And silent prayers to Mercy's throne address ;  
 While fiercer minds, impatient, angry, loud,  
 Force their vain grief on the reluctant crowd :  
 The party's patron, sorely sighing, cried,  
 'Why would you urge me ? I at first denied.'  
 Fiercely they answer'd, 'Why will you complain,

Who saw no danger, or was warn'd in vain ?'

A few essay'd the troubled soul to calm,  
 But dread prevail'd, and anguish and alarm.

Now rose the water through the lessening sand,

And they seem'd sinking while they yet could stand ;

The sun went down, they look'd from side to side,

Nor aught except the gathering sea descried ;  
 Dark and more dark, more wet, more cold it grew,

And the most lively bade to hope adieu ;  
 Children, by love then lifted from the seas,  
 Felt not the water at the parents' knees,  
 But wept aloud ; the wind increased the sound,

And the cold billows as they broke around.

'Once more, yet once again, with all our strength,

Cry to the land—we may be heard at length.'  
 Vain hope, if yet unseen ! but hark ! an oar,  
 That sound of bliss ! comes dashing to their shore ;

Still, still the water rises, 'Haste !' they cry,  
 'Oh ! hurry, seamen ; in delay we die :'

(Seamen were these, who in their ship perceived

The drifted boat, and thus her crew relieved.)  
 And now the keel just cuts the cover'd sand,  
 Now to the gunwale stretches every hand :  
 With trembling pleasure all confused embark,  
 And kiss the tackling of their welcome ark ;  
 While the most giddy, as they reach the shore,  
 Think of their danger, and their God adore.



## LETTER X. CLUBS AND SOCIAL MEETINGS

Non inter lances mensasque nitentes,  
Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, et cum  
Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat;  
Verum hic impransi mecum disquirite.

HOR. *Sat.* ii, lib. 2, vv. 4-7.

O prodiga rerum

Luxuries, numquam parvo contenta paratis,  
Et quæsitorem terra pelagoque ciborum  
Ambitiosa fames et lautæ gloria mensæ.

LUCAN, lib. iv. 373-6.

Sed quæ non prosunt singula, multa juvant.

OVID, *Rem. Amor.* v. 420.

Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,  
Rectorem dubiæ navitæ puppis amat.

OVID, *Pont.* lib. ii, vv. 61, 62.

Desire of Country Gentlemen for Town Associations—Book-clubs—Too much of literary Character expected from them—Literary Conversation prevented: by Feasting: by Cards—Good, notwithstanding, results—Card-club with Eagerness resorted to—Players—Umpires at the Whist Table—Petulances of Temper there discovered—Free-and-easy Club: not perfectly easy or free—Freedom, how interrupted—The superior Member—Termination of the Evening—Drinking and Smoking Clubs—The Midnight Conversation of the delaying Members—Society of the poorer Inhabitants: its Use: gives Pride and Consequence to the humble Character—Pleasant Habitation of the frugal Poor—Sailor returning to his Family—Freemasons' Club—The Mystery—What its Origin—Its professed Advantages—Griggs and Gregorians—A Kind of Masons—Reflections on these various Societies.

You say you envy in your calm retreat  
Our social meetings;—'tis with joy we meet:  
In these our parties you are pleased to find  
Good sense and wit, with intercourse of mind;  
Composed of men, who read, reflect, and

write,

Who, when they meet, must yield and share  
delight:

To you our Book-club has peculiar charm,  
For which you sicken in your quiet farm;  
Here you suppose us at our leisure placed,  
Enjoying freedom, and displaying taste;  
With wisdom cheerful, temperately gay,  
Pleased to enjoy, and willing to display.

If thus your envy gives your ease its gloom,  
Give wings to fancy, and among us come.

We're now assembled; you may soon attend—  
I'll introduce you—'Gentlemen, my friend.'

'Now are you happy? you have pass'd a  
night

In gay discourse, and rational delight.'

'Alas! not so: for how can mortals think,  
Or thoughts exchange, if thus they eat and  
drink?

No! I confess, when we had fairly dined,  
That was no time for intercourse of mind;  
There was each dish prepared with skill  
to invite,

And to detain the struggling appetite;  
On such occasions minds with one consent  
Are to the comforts of the body lent;  
There was no pause—the wine went quickly  
round,

Till struggling Fancy was by Bacchus bound;  
Wine is to wit as water thrown on fire,  
By duly sprinkling both are raised the higher;  
Thus largely dealt, the vivid blaze they choke,  
And all the genial flame goes off in smoke.'

'But when no more your boards these loads  
contain,

When wine no more o'erwhelms the labouring  
brain,

But serves, a gentle stimulus; we know  
How wit must sparkle, and how fancy flow.'

It might be so, but no such club-days come:  
We always find these dampers in the room;  
If to converse were all that brought us here,  
A few odd members would in turn appear;  
Who dwelling nigh, would saunter in and out,  
O'erlook the list, and toss the books about;  
Or yawning read them, walking up and down,  
Just as the loungers in the shops in town;  
Till fancying nothing would their minds  
amuse,

They'd push them by, and go in search of  
news.

But our attractions are a stronger sort,  
The earliest dainties and the oldest pot;  
All enter then with glee in every look,  
And not a member thinks about a book.

Still let me own, there are some vacant hours,  
When minds might work, and men exert their  
powers:

Ere wine to folly spurs the giddy guest,  
But gives to wit its vigour and its zest ;  
Then might we reason, might in turn display  
Our several talents, and be wisely gay ;  
We might—but who a tame discourse regards,  
When whist is named, and we behold the  
cards ?

We from that time are neither grave nor  
gay ;

Our thought, our care, our business is to play :  
Fix'd on these spots and figures, each attends  
Much to his partners, nothing to his friends.

Our public cares, the long, the warm debate,  
That kept our patriots from their beds so late ;  
War, peace, invasion, all we hope or dread,  
Vanish like dreams when men forsake their  
bed ;

And groaning nations and contending kings  
Are all forgotten for these painted things :  
Paper and paste, vile figures and poor spots,  
Level all minds, philosophers and sots ;  
And give an equal spirit, pause, and force,  
Join'd with peculiar diction, to discourse :  
' Who deals ?—you led—we're three by cards  
—had you

Honour in hand ? '— Upon my honour, two.'  
Hour after hour, men thus contending sit,  
Grave without sense, and pointed without wit.

Thus it appears these envied clubs possess  
No certain means of social happiness ;  
Yet there 's a good that flows from scenes like  
these—

Man meets with man at leisure and at ease ;  
We to our neighbours and our equals come,  
And rub off pride that man contracts at  
home ;

For there, admitted master, he is prone  
To claim attention and to talk alone :  
But here he meets with neither son nor  
spouse ;

No humble cousin to his bidding bows ;  
To his raised voice his neighbours' voices  
rise,

To his high look as lofty look replies ;  
When much he speaks, he finds that ears are  
closed,

And certain signs inform him when he 's  
prosed ;

Here all the value of a listener know,  
And claim, in turn, the favour they bestow.

No pleasure gives the speech, when all  
would speak,

And all in vain a civil hearer seek.

To chance alone we owe the free discourse,  
In vain you purpose what you cannot force ;  
'Tis when the favourite themes unbidden  
spring,

That fancy soars with such unwearied wing ;  
Then may you call in aid the moderate glass,  
But let it slowly and unprompted pass ;  
So shall there all things for the end unite,  
And give that hour of rational delight.

Men to their clubs repair, themselves to  
please,

To care for nothing, and to take their ease ;  
In fact, for play, for wine, for news they  
come :

Discourse is shared with friends or found at  
home.

But cards with books are incidental things ;  
We've nights devoted to these queens and  
kings :

Then if we choose the social game, we may ;  
Now 'tis a duty, and we're bound to play ;  
Nor ever meeting of the social kind  
Was more engaging, yet had less of mind.

Our eager parties, when the lunar light  
Throws its full radiance on the festive night,  
Of either sex, with punctual hurry come,  
And fill, with one accord, an ample room ;  
Pleased, the fresh packs on cloth of green they  
see,

And seizing, handle with preluding glee ;  
They draw, they sit, they shuffle, cut and  
deal ;

Like friends assembled, but like foes to feel :  
But yet not all,—a happier few have joys  
Of mere amusement, and their cards are toys ;  
No skill nor art, nor fretful hopes have they,  
But while their friends are gaming, laugh and  
play.

Others there are, the veterans of the game,  
Who owe their pleasure to their envied fame ;  
Through many a year, with hard-contested  
strife,

Have they attain'd this glory of their life :  
Such is that ancient burgess, whom in vain  
Would gout and fever on his couch detain ;  
And that large lady, who resolves to come,  
Though a first fit has warn'd her of her  
doom !

These are as oracles : in every cause  
They settle doubts, and their decrees are laws ;  
But all are troubled, when, with dubious look,  
Diana questions what Apollo spoke.

Here avarice first, the keen desire of gain,  
Rules in each heart, and works in every  
brain ;

Alike the veteran-dames and virgins feel,  
Nor care what gray-beards or what striplings  
deal ;

Sex, age, and station, vanish from their view,  
And gold, their sov'reign good, the mingled  
crowd pursue.

Hence they are jealous, and as rivals, keep  
A watchful eye on the beloved heap ;  
Meantime discretion bids the tongue be still,  
And mild good-humour strives with strong  
ill-will ;

Till prudence fails ; when, all impatient  
grown,

They make their grief, by their suspicions,  
known.

' Sir, I protest, were Job himself at play,  
He'd rave to see you throw your cards away ;  
Not that I care a button—not a pin  
For what I lose ; but we had cards to win :  
A saint in heaven would grieve to see such  
hand

Cut up by one who will not understand.'

' Complain of me ! and so you might indeed,  
If I had ventured on that foolish lead,  
That fatal heart—but I forgot your play—  
Some folk have ever thrown their hearts  
away.'

' Yes, and their diamonds ; I have heard of  
one

Who made a beggar of an only son.'

' Better a beggar, than to see him tied  
To art and spite, to insolence and pride.'

' Sir, were I you, I'd strive to be polite,  
Against my nature, for a single night.'

' So did you strive, and, madam ! with  
success ;

I knew no being we could censure less !'

Is this too much ? alas ! my peaceful muse  
Cannot with half their violence abuse.

And hark ! at other tables discord reigns,  
With feign'd contempt for losses and for  
gains ;

Passions awhile are bridled ; then they rage,  
In waspish youth, and in resentful age ;

With scraps of insult—' Sir, when next you  
play,

Reflect whose money 'tis you throw away  
No one on earth can less such things regard.

But when one's partner doesn't know a  
card—'

' I scorn suspicion, ma'am, but while you  
stand

Behind that lady, pray keep down your  
hand.'

' Good heav'n, revoke ! remember, if the  
set

Be lost, in honour you should pay the debt.'

' There, there's your money ; but, while  
I have life,

I'll never more sit down with man and wife ;  
They snap and snarl indeed, but in the heat  
Of all their spleen, their understandings meet ;  
They are Freemasons, and have many a sign,  
That we, poor devils ! never can divine :  
May it be told, do ye divide th' amount,  
Or goes it all to family account ?'

Next is the club, where to their friends in  
town

Our country neighbours once a month come  
down ;

We term it Free-and-easy, and yet we  
Find it no easy matter to be free :

Ev'n in our small assembly, friends among,  
Are minds perverse, there's something will  
be wrong ;

Men are not equal ; some will claim a right  
To be the kings and heroes of the night ;  
Will their own favourite themes and notions  
start,

And you must hear, offend them, or depart.  
There comes Sir Thomas from his village-  
seat,

Happy, he tells us, all his friends to meet ;  
He brings the ruin'd brother of his wife,  
Whom he supports, and makes him sick of  
life ;

A ready witness whom he can produce  
Of all his deeds—a butt for his abuse ;  
Soon as he enters, has the guests espied,  
Drawn to the fire, and to the glass applied—  
' Well, what's the subject ?—what are you  
about ?'

The news, I take it—come, I'll help you  
out ;'

And then, without one answer, he bestows  
Freely upon us all he hears and knows ;  
Gives us opinions, tells us how he votes,  
Recites the speeches, adds to them his notes,  
And gives old ill-told tales for new-born  
anecdotes ;

Yet cares he nothing what we judge or think,  
Our only duty 's to attend and drink :

At length, admonish'd by his gout, he ends  
The various speech, and leaves at peace his  
friends ;

But now, alas ! we've lost the pleasant hour,  
And wisdom flies from wine's superior power.

Wine, like the rising sun, possession gains,  
And drives the mist of dulness from the brains;  
The gloomy vapour from the spirit flies,  
And views of gaiety and gladness rise :  
Still it proceeds ; till from the glowing heat,  
The prudent calmly to their shades retreat ;—  
Then is the mind o'ercast—in wordy rage  
And loud contention angry men engage ;  
Then spleen and pique, like fire-works thrown  
in spite,

To mischief turn the pleasures of the night ;  
Anger abuses, Malice loudly rails,  
Revenge awakes, and Anarchy prevails :  
Till wine, that raised the tempest, makes it  
cease,

And maudlin Love insists on instant peace ;  
He noisy mirth and roaring song commands,  
Gives idle toasts, and joins unfriendly hands ;  
Till fuddled Friendship vows esteem and  
weeps,

And jovial Folly drinks and sings and sleeps.

A club there is of Smokers—Dare you come  
To that close, clouded, hot, narcotic room ?  
When, midnight past, the very candles seem  
Dying for air, and give a ghastly gleam ;  
When curling fumes in lazy wreaths arise,  
And prosing toppers rub their winking eyes ;  
When the long tale, renew'd when last they  
met,

Is spliced anew, and is unfinish'd yet ;  
When but a few are left the house to tire,  
And they half-sleeping by the sleepy fire ;  
Ev'n the poor ventilating vane, that flew  
Of late so fast, is now grown drowsy too ;  
When sweet, cold, clammy punch its aid  
bestows,

Then thus the midnight conversation flows :—  
' Then, as I said, and—mind me—as I say,  
At our last meeting—you remember'—' Ay ;'  
' Well, very well—then freely as I drink  
I spoke my thought—you take me—what I  
think :

And sir, said I, if I a freeman be,  
It is my bounden duty to be free.'

' Ay, there you posed him : I respect the  
chair,

But man is man, although the man's a mayor :

If Muggins live—no, no !—if Muggins die,  
He'll quit his office—neighbour, shall I try ?'

' I'll speak my mind, for here are none but  
friends :

They're all contending for their private ends ;  
No public spirit—once a vote would bring,  
I say a vote—was then a pretty thing ;  
It made a man to serve his country and his  
king :

But for that place, that Muggins must resign,  
You've my advice—'tis no affair of mine.'

The poor man has his club ; he comes and  
spends

His hoarded pittance with his chosen friends ;  
Nor this alone,—a monthly dole he pays,  
To be assisted when his health decays ;  
Some part his prudence, from the day's  
supply,

For cares and troubles in his age, lays by ;  
The printed rules he guards with painted  
frame,

And shows his children where to read his  
name :

Those simple words his honest nature move,  
That bond of union tied by laws of love ;  
This is his pride, it gives to his employ  
New value, to his home another joy ;  
While a religious hope its balm applies  
For all his fate inflicts and all his state denies.

Much would it please you, sometimes to  
explore

The peaceful dwellings of our borough poor ;  
To view a sailor just return'd from sea,  
His wife beside ; a child on either knee,  
And others crowding near, that none may lose  
The smallest portion of the welcome news ;  
What dangers pass'd, ' when seas ran moun-  
tains high,

When tempests raved, and horrors veil'd the  
sky ;

When prudence fail'd, when courage grew  
dismay'd,

When the strong fainted, and the wicked  
pray'd,—

Then in the yawning gulf far down we drove,  
And gazed upon the billowy mount above ;  
Till up that mountain, swinging with the  
gale,

We view'd the horrors of the watery vale.'

The trembling children look with stedfast  
eyes,

And panting, sob involuntary sighs :

Soft sleep awhile his torpid touch delays,  
And all is joy and piety and praise.

Masons are ours, Freemasons—but, alas !  
To their own bards I leave the mystic class ;  
In vain shall one, and not a gifted man,  
Attempt to sing of this enlighten'd clan :  
I know no word, boast no directing sign,  
And not one token of the race is mine ;  
Whether with Hiram, that wise widow's son,  
They came from Tyre to royal Solomon,  
Two pillars raising by their skill profound,  
Boaz and Jachin through the East renown'd :  
Whether the sacred books their rise express,  
Or books profane, 'tis vain for me to guess ;  
It may be, lost in date remote and high,  
They know not what their own antiquity :  
It may be too, derived from cause so low,  
They have no wish their origin to show :  
If, as crusaders, they combined to wrest  
From heathen lords the land they long possess'd ;

Or were at first some harmless club, who made  
Their idle meetings solemn by parade ;  
Is but conjecture—for the task unfit,  
Awe-struck and mute, the puzzling theme I  
quit :

Yet, if such blessings from their order flow,  
We should be glad their moral code to know ;  
Trowels of silver are but simple things,  
And aprons worthless as their apron-strings ;  
But if indeed you have the skill to teach  
A social spirit, now beyond our reach ;  
If man's warm passions you can guide and  
bind,

And plant the virtues in the wayward mind ;  
If you can wake to christian-love the heart,—  
In mercy, something of your powers impart.

But as it seems, we Masons must become  
To know the secret, and must then be dumb ;  
And as we venture for uncertain gains,  
Perhaps the profit is not worth the pains.

When Bruce, that dauntless traveller,  
thought he stood  
On Nile's first rise ! the fountain of the flood,  
And drank exulting in the sacred spring,  
The critics told him it was no such thing ;  
That springs unnumber'd round the country  
ran,  
But none could show him where they first  
began :

So might we feel, should we our time bestow,  
To gain these secrets and these signs to know ;

Might question still if all the truth we found,  
And firmly stood upon the certain ground ;  
We might our title to the mystery dread,  
And fear we drank not at the river-head.

Griggs and Gregorians here their meetings  
hold,

Convivial sects, and Bucks alert and bold ;  
A kind of Masons, but without their sign ;  
The bonds of union—pleasure, song, and wine :  
Man, a gregarious creature, loves to fly  
Where he the trackings of the herd can spy ;  
Still to be one with many he desires,  
Although it leads him through the thorns and  
briers.

A few ! but few there are, who in the mind  
Perpetual source of consolation find ;  
The weaker many to the world will come,  
For comforts seldom to be found from home.

When the faint hands no more a brimmer  
hold,

When flannel-wreaths the useless limbs infold,  
The breath impeded, and the bosom cold ;  
When half the pillow'd man the palsy chains,  
And the blood falters in the bloated veins,—  
Then, as our friends no further aid supply  
Than hope's cold phrase and courtesy's soft  
sigh,

We should that comfort for ourselves ensure,  
Which friends could not, if we could friends,  
procure.

Early in life, when we can laugh aloud,  
There 's something pleasant in a social crowd,  
Who laugh with us—but will such joy remain,  
When we lie struggling on the bed of pain ?  
When our physician tells us with a sigh,  
No more on hope and science to rely,  
Life's staff is useless then ; with labouring  
breath

We pray for hope divine—the staff of death—  
This is a scene which few companions grace,  
And where the heart's first favourites yield  
their place.

Here all the aid of man to man must end,  
Here mounts the soul to her eternal Friend ;  
The tenderest love must here its tie resign,  
And give th' aspiring heart to love divine.

Men feel their weakness, and to numbers run,  
Themselves to strengthen, or themselves to  
shun ;

But though to this our weakness may be  
prone,

Let 's learn to live, for we must die, alone.

## LETTER XI. INNS

ALL the comforts of life in a tavern are known,  
'Tis his home who possesses not one of his  
own;

And to him that has rather too much of that  
one,  
'Tis the house of a friend where he 's welcome  
to run :

The instant you enter my door you're my  
lord,  
With whose taste and whose pleasure I'm  
proud to accord ;  
And the louder you call and the longer you  
stay,  
The more I am happy to serve and obey.

To the house of a friend if you're pleased to  
retire,  
You must all things admit, you must all things  
admire ;

You must pay with observance the price of  
your treat,  
You must eat what is praised, and must praise  
what you eat :

But here you may come, and no tax we require,  
You may loudly condemn what you greatly  
admire ;

You may growl at our wishes and pains to  
excel,  
And may snarl at the rascals who please you  
so well.

At your wish we attend, and confess that your  
speech

On the nation's affairs might the minister  
teach ;

His views you may blame, and his measures  
oppose,

There 's no tavern-treason—you're under the  
Rose :

Should rebellions arise in your own little  
state,

With me you may safely their consequence  
wait ;

To recruit your lost spirits 'tis prudent to come  
And to fly to a friend when the devil 's at home.

That I've faults is confess'd ; •but it won't be  
denied,

'Tis my interest the faults of my neighbours  
to hide ;

If I've sometimes lent Scandal occasion to  
prate,

I've often conceal'd what she'd love to relate ;  
If to Justice's bar some have wander'd from  
mine,

'Twas because the dull rogues wouldn't stay  
by their wine ;

And for brawls at my house, well the poet  
explains,  
That men drink *shallow draughts*, and so  
madden their brains.

A difficult Subject for Poetry—Invocation of  
the Muse—Description of the principal Inn  
and those of the first Class—The large  
deserted Tavern—Those of a second Order  
—Their Company—One of particular De-  
scription—A lower Kind of Public-Houses :  
yet distinguished among themselves—  
Houses on the Quays for Sailors—The  
Green-Man : its Landlord, and the Ad-  
venture of his Marriage, &c.

MUCH do I need, and therefore will I ask,  
A Muse to aid me in my present task ;  
For then with special cause we beg for aid,  
When of our subject we are most afraid:  
Inns are this subject—'tis an ill-drawn lot,  
So, thou who gravely triflest, fail me not.  
Fail not, but haste, and to my memory bring  
Scenes yet unsung, which few would choose  
to sing :

Thou mad'st a Shilling splendid ; thou hast  
thrown

On humble themes the graces all thine own ;  
By thee the Mistress of a village-school  
Became a queen, enthroned upon her stool ;  
And far beyond the rest thou gav'st to shine  
Behind's Lock—that deathless work was  
thine.

Come, lend thy cheerful light, and give to  
please,

These seats of revelry, these scenes of ease ;  
Who sings of Inns much danger has to dread,  
And needs assistance from the fountain-head.

High in the street, o'erlooking all the place,  
The rampant Lion shows his kingly face ;  
His ample jaws extend from side to side,  
His eyes are glaring, and his nostrils wide ;  
In silver shag the sovereign form is dress'd,  
A mane horrific sweeps his ample chest ;  
Elate with pride, he seems t' assert his reign,  
And stands the glory of his wide domain.

Yet nothing dreadful to his friends the sight,  
But sign and pledge of welcome and delight :  
To him the noblest guest the town detains  
Flies for repast, and in his court remains ;  
Him too the crowd with longing looks admire,  
Sighs for his joys, and modestly retire ;

Here not a comfort shall to them be lost  
Who never ask or never feel the cost.

The ample yards on either side contain  
Buildings where order and distinction reign;  
The splendid carriage of the wealthier guest,  
The ready chaise and driver smartly dress'd;  
Whiskys and gigs and carriages are there,  
And high-fed prancers many a raw-boned pair.  
On all without a lordly host sustains  
The care of empire, and observant reigns;  
The parting guest beholds him at his side,  
With pomp obsequious, bending in his pride;  
Round all the place his eyes all objects meet,  
Attentive, silent, civil, and discreet.  
O'er all within the lady-hostess rules,  
Her bar she governs, and her kitchen schools;  
To every guest th' appropriate speech is made,  
And every duty with distinction paid;  
Respectful, easy, pleasant, or polite—  
' Your honour's servant—Mister Smith, good-night.'

Next, but not near, yet honour'd through  
the town,  
There swing, incongruous pair! the Bear and  
Crown;

That Crown suspended gems and ribbands deck,  
A golden chain hangs o'er that furry neck:  
Unlike the nobler beast, the Bear is bound,  
And with the Crown so near him, scowls uncrown'd;

Less his dominion, but alert are all  
Without, within, and ready for the call;  
Smart lads and light run nimbly here and there,  
Nor for neglected duties mourns the Bear.

To his retreats, on the election-day,  
The losing party found their silent way;  
There they partook of each consoling good,  
Like him uncrown'd, like him in sullen mood—  
Threat'ning, but bound.—Here meet a social  
kind,

Our various clubs for various cause combined;  
Nor has he pride, but thankful takes as gain  
The dew-drops shaken from the Lion's mane:  
A thriving couple here their skill display,  
And share the profits of no vulgar sway.

Third in our Borough's list appears the sign  
Of a fair queen—the gracious Caroline;  
But in decay—each feature in the face  
Has stain of Time, and token of disgrace.  
The storm of winter, and the summer-sun,  
Have on that form their equal mischief done;  
The features now are all disfigured seen,  
And not one charm adorns th' insulted queen:

To this poor face was never paint applied,  
Th' unseemly work of cruel Time to hide;  
Here we may rightly such neglect upbraid,  
Paint on such faces is by prudence laid.  
Large the domain, but all within combine  
To correspond with the dishonour'd sign;  
And all around dilapidates; you call—  
But none replies—they're inattentive all:  
At length a ruin'd stable holds your steed.  
While you through large and dirty rooms  
proceed,

Spacious and cold; a proof they once had been  
In honour—now magnificently mean;  
Tillinsome small half-furnish'd room you rest,  
Whose dying fire denotes it had a guest.  
In those you pass'd where former splendour  
reign'd,

You saw the carpets torn, the paper stain'd;  
Squares of discordant glass in windows fix'd,  
And paper oil'd in many a space betwixt;  
A soil'd and broken scone, a mirror crack'd,  
With table underpropp'd, and chairs new-  
back'd;

A marble side-slab with ten thousand stains,  
And all an ancient tavern's poor remains.

With much entreaty, they your food pre-  
pare,  
And acid wine afford, with meagre fare;  
Heartless you sup; and when a dozen times  
You've read the fractured window's senseless  
rhymes;

Have been assured that Phoebe Green was  
fair,  
And Peter Jackson took his supper there;  
You reach a chilling chamber, where you  
dread

Damps, hot or cold, from a tremendous bed;  
Late comes your sleep, and you are waken'd  
soon

By rustling tatters of the old festoon.

O'er this large building, thus by time de-  
faced,

A servile couple has its owner placed,  
Who not unmindful that its style is large,  
To lost magnificence adapt their charge:  
Thus an old beauty, who has long declined,  
Keeps former dues and dignity in mind;  
And wills that all attention should be paid  
For graces vanish'd and for charms decay'd.

Few years have pass'd, since brightly 'cross  
the way,  
Lights from each window shot the lengthen'd  
ray,

And busy looks in every face were seen,  
Through the warm precincts of the reigning  
Queen :

There fires inviting blazed, and all around  
Was heard the tinkling bells' seducing sound ;  
The nimble waiters to that sound from far  
Sprang to the call, then hasten'd to the bar ;  
Where a glad priestess of the temple sway'd,  
The most obedient, and the most obey'd ;  
Rosy and round, adorn'd in crimson vest,  
And flaming ribands at her ample breast :  
She, skill'd like Circe, tried her guests to  
move,

With looks of welcome and with words of love ;  
And such her potent charms, that men unwise  
Were soon transform'd and fitted for the sties.

Her port in bottles stood, a well-stain'd  
row,

Drawn for the evening from the pipe below ;  
Three powerful spirits fill'd a parted case,  
Some cordial-bottles stood in secret place ;  
Fair acid fruits in nets above were seen,  
Her plate was splendid, and her glasses clean ;  
Basins and bowls were ready on the stand,  
And measures clatter'd in her powerful hand.

Inferior houses now our notice claim,  
But who shall deal them their appropriate  
fame ?

Who shall the nice, yet known distinction,  
tell,

Between the peal complete and single bell ?

Determine, ye, who on your shining nags  
Wear oil-skin beavers and bear-seal-skin bags ;  
Or ye, grave toppers, who with coy delight  
Snugly enjoy the sweetness of the night ;  
Ye travellers all, superior inns denied  
By moderate purse, the low by decent pride ;  
Come and determine,—will ye take your place  
At the full orb, or half the lunar face ?  
With the Black-Boy or Angel will ye dine ?  
Will ye approve the Fountain or the Vine ?  
Horses the white or black will ye prefer ?  
The Silver-Swan, or swan opposed to her—  
Rare bird ! whose form the raven-plumage  
decks,

And graceful curve her three alluring necks ?

All these a decent entertainment give,  
And by their comforts comfortably live.

Shall I pass by the Boar ?—there are who  
cry,

' Beware the Boar,' and pass determined by :  
Those dreadful tusks, those little peering eyes  
And churning chaps, are tokens to the wise.

There dwells a kind old aunt, and there you  
see

Some kind young nieces in her company ;  
Poor village nieces, whom the tender dame  
Invites to town, and gives their beauty fame ;  
The grateful sisters feel th' important aid,  
And the good aunt is flatter'd and repaid.

What though it may some cool observers  
strike,

That such fair sisters should be so unlike ;  
That still another and another comes,  
And at the matron's table smiles and blooms ;  
That all appear as if they meant to stay  
Time undefined, nor name a parting day ;  
And yet, though all are valued, all are dear,  
Causeless, they go, and seldom more appear :

Yet let Suspicion hide her odious head,  
And Scandal vengeance from a burgess dread :  
A pious friend, who with the ancient dame  
At sober cribbage takes an evening game ;  
His cup beside him, through their play he  
quaffs,

And oft renews, and innocently laughs ;  
Or growing serious, to the text resorts,  
And from the Sunday-sermon makes reports ;  
While all, with grateful glee, his wish attend,  
A grave protector and a powerful friend :  
But Slander says, who indistinctly sees,  
Once he was caught with Silvia on his knees ;—  
A cautious burgess with a careful wife  
To be so caught !—'tis false, upon my life.

Next are a lower kind, yet not so low  
But they, among them, their distinctions  
know ;

And when a thriving landlord aims so high  
As to exchange the Chequer for the Pye,  
Or from Duke William to the Dog repairs,  
He takes a finer coat and fiercer airs.

Pleased with his power, the poor man loves  
to say

What favourite inn shall share his evening's  
pavory ;

Where he shall sit the social hour, and  
lose

His past day's labours and his next day's  
views.

Our seamen too have choice : one takes a  
trip

In the warm cabin of his favourite ship ;  
And on the morrow in the humbler boat  
He rows, till fancy feels herself afloat ;  
(Can he the sign—Three Jolly Sailors—pass,  
Who hears a fiddle and who sees a lass ?



The Anchor too affords the seaman joys,  
In small smoked room, all clamour, crowd,  
and noise ;

Where a curved settle half surrounds the fire,  
Where fifty voices pull and punch require :  
They come for pleasure in their leisure hour,  
And they enjoy it to their utmost power ;  
Standing they drink, they swearing smoke,  
while all

Call or make ready for a second call :  
There is no time for trifling—' Do ye see ?  
We drink and drub the French extempore.'

See ! round the room, on every beam and balk,

Are mingled scrolls of hieroglyphic chalk ;  
Yet nothing heeded—would one stroke suffice  
To blot out all, here honour is too nice,—  
' Let knavish landmen think such dirty  
things,

We're British tars, and British tars are kings.'

But the Green-Man shall I pass by unsung,  
Which mine own James upon his sign-post  
hung ?

His sign, his image,—for he once was seen  
A squire's attendant, clad in keeper's green ;  
Ere yet with wages more, and honour less,  
He stood behind me in a graver dress.

James in an evil hour went forth to woo  
Young Juliet Hart, and was her Romeo :  
They'd seen the play, and thought it vastly  
sweet

For two young lovers by the moon to meet ;  
The nymph was gentle, of her favours free,  
Ev'n at a word—no Rosalind was she ;  
Nor, like that other Juliet, tried his truth  
With—' Be thy purpose marriage, gentle  
youth ?'

But him received, and heard his tender tale  
When sang the lark, and when the nightingale :  
So in few months the generous lass was seen  
I' the way that all the Capulets had been.

Then first repentance seized the amorous  
man,

And—shame on love—he reason'd and he ran ;  
The thoughtful Romeo trembled for his purse,  
And the sad sounds, 'for better and for worse.'

Yet could the lover not so far withdraw,  
But he was haunted both by love and law :  
Now law dismay'd him as he view'd its fangs,  
Now pity seized him for his Juliet's pangs ;  
Then thoughts of justice and some dread of jail,  
Where all would blame him and where none  
might bail ;

These drew him back, till Juliet's hut ap-  
pear'd,

Where love had drawn him when he should  
have fear'd.

There sat the father in his wicker throne,  
Uttering his curses in tremendous tone ;  
With foulest names his daughter he reviled,  
And look'd a very Herod at the child :

Nor was she patient, but with equal scorn,  
Bade him remember when his Joe was born :  
Then rose the mother, eager to begin  
Her plea for frailty, when the swain came in.

To him she turn'd, and other theme began,  
Show'd him his boy, and bade him be a man ;  
' An honest man, who, when he breaks the  
laws,

Will make a woman honest if there 's cause.'  
With lengthen'd speech she proved what  
came to pass

Was no reflection on a loving lass :

' If she your love as wife and mother claim,  
What can it matter which was first the name ?  
But 'tis most base, 'tis perjury and theft,

When a lost girl is like a widow left ;  
The rogue who ruins'—here the father found  
His spouse was treading on forbidden ground.

' That 's not the point,' quoth he,—' I don't  
suppose

My good friend Fletcher to be one of those ;  
What 's done amiss he'll mend in proper  
time—

I hate to hear of villany and crime :

'Twas my misfortune, in the days of youth,  
To find two lasses pleading for my truth ;  
The case was hard, I would with all my soul  
Have wedded both, but law is our control ;  
So one I took, and when we gain'd a home,  
Her friend agreed—what could she more ?—  
to come ;

And when she found that I'd a widow'd bed,  
Me she desired—what could I less ?—to wed.  
An easier case is yours : you've not the smart  
That two fond pleaders cause in one man's  
heart ;

You've not to wait from year to year dis-  
tress'd,

Before your conscience can be laid at rest ;  
There smiles your bride, there sprawls your  
new-born son,

—A ring, a licence, and the thing is done.'

' My loving James,'—the lass began her  
plea,

' I'll make thy reason take a part with me :

Had I been froward, skittish, or unkind,  
 Or to thy person or thy passion blind ;  
 Had I refused, when 'twas thy part to pray,  
 Or put thee off with promise and delay ;  
 Thou might'st in justice and in conscience fly,  
 Denying her who taught thee to deny :  
 But, James, with me thou hadst an easier task,  
 Bonds and conditions I forbore to ask ;  
 I laid no traps for thee, no plots or plans,  
 Nor marriage named by licence or by banns ;  
 Nor would I now the parson's aid employ,  
 But for this cause,'—and up she held her boy.  
 Motives like these could heart of flesh resist ?  
 James took the infant and in triumph kiss'd ;

Then to his mother's arms the child re-  
 stored,  
 Made his proud speech, and pledged his  
 worthy word.  
 ' Three times at church our banns shall  
 publish'd be,  
 Thy health be drunk in bumpers three times  
 three ;  
 And thou shalt grace (bedeck'd in garments  
 gay)  
 The christening-dinner on the wedding day.'  
 James at my door then made his parting  
 bow,  
 Took the Green-Man, and is a master now.

## LETTER XII. PLAYERS

These are monarchs none respect,  
 Heroes, yet an humbled crew,  
 Nobles, whom the crowd correct,  
 Wealthy men, whom duns pursue ;  
 Beauties, shrinking from the view  
 Of the day's detecting eye ;  
 Lovers, who with much ado  
 Long-forsaken damsels woo,  
 And heave the ill-feign'd sigh.  
 These are misers, craving means  
 Of existence through the day,  
 Famous scholars, conning scenes  
 Of dull bewildering play ;  
 Ragged beaux and misses grey,  
 Whom the rabble praise and blame ;  
 Proud and mean, and sad and gay,  
 Toiling after ease, are they,  
 Infamous \*, and boasting fame.

Players arrive in the Borough—Welcomed by  
 their former Friends—Are better fitted for  
 Comic than Tragic Scenes : yet better  
 approved in the latter by one Part of their  
 Audience—Their general Character and  
 Plesantry—Particular Distresses and  
 Labours—Their Fortitude and Patience—  
 A private Rehearsal—The Vanity of the  
 aged Actress—A Heroine from the Milliner's  
 Shop—A deluded Tradesman—Of what Per-  
 sons the Company is composed—Character  
 and Adventures of Frederick Thompson.

DRAWN by the annual call, we now behold  
 Our troop dramatic, heroes known of old,  
 And those, since last they march'd, inlisted  
 and enroll'd :

\* Strolling players are thus held in a legal  
 sense.

Mounted on hacks or borne in waggons some,  
 The rest on foot (the humbler brethren) come.  
 Three favour'd places, an unequal time,  
 Join to support this company sublime :  
 Ours for the longer period—see how light  
 Yon parties move, their former friends in sight,  
 Whose claims are all allow'd, and friendship  
 glads the night.  
 Now public rooms shall sound with words  
 divine,  
 And private lodgings hear how heroes shine ;  
 No talk of pay shall yet on pleasure steal,  
 But kindest welcome bless the friendly meal ;  
 While o'er the social jug and decent cheer,  
 Shall be described the fortunes of the year.  
 Peruse these bills, and see what each can  
 do,—  
 Behold ! the prince, the slave, the monk, the  
 Jew ;  
 Change but the garment, and they'll all engage  
 To take each part, and act in every age :  
 Cull'd from all houses, what a house are they !  
 Swept from all barns, our borough-critics say ;  
 But with some portion of a critic's ire,  
 We all endure them ; there are some admire :  
 They might have praise, confined to farce  
 alone ;  
 Full well they grin, they should not try to  
 groan ;  
 But then our servants' and our seamen's wives  
 Love all that rant and rapture as their lives ;  
 He who 'Squire Richard's part could well  
 sustain,  
 Finds as King Richard he must roar amain—

'My horse! my horse!'—Lo! now to their abodes,

Come lords and lovers, empresses and gods.  
The master-mover of these scenes has made  
No trifling gain in this adventurous trade;  
Trade we may term it, for he duly buys  
Arms out of use and undirected eyes;  
These he instructs, and guides them as he can,  
And vends each night the manufactured man:  
Long as our custom lasts, they gladly stay,  
Then strike their tents, like Tartars! and  
away!

The place grows bare where they too long  
remain,

But grass will rise ere they return again.

Children of Thespis, welcome! knights and  
queens!

Counts! barons! beauties! when before  
your scenes,

And mighty monarchs thund'ring from your  
throne;

Then step behind, and all your glory's gone:  
Of crown and palace, throne and guards  
bereft,

The pomp is vanish'd, and the care is left.  
Yet strong and lively is the joy they feel,  
When the full house secures the plenteous  
meal;

Flatt'ring and flatter'd, each attempts to raise  
A brother's merits for a brother's praise:

For never hero shows a prouder heart,  
Than he who proudly acts a hero's part;  
Nor without cause; the boards, we know,  
can yield

Place for fierce contest, like the tented field.  
Graceful to tread the stage, to be in turn

The prince we honour, and the knave we  
spurn;

Bravely to bear the tumult of the crowd,  
The hiss tremendous, and the censure loud:  
These are their parts,—and he who these  
sustains

Deserves some praise and profit for his pains.  
Heroes at least of gentler kind are they,  
Against whose swords no weeping widows  
pray,

No blood their fury sheds, nor havoc marks  
their way.

Sad happy race! soon raised and soon  
depress'd,

Your days all pass'd in jeopardy and jest;  
Poor without prudence, with afflictions vain,  
Not warn'd by misery, not enrich'd by gain;

Whom justice pitying, chides from place to  
place,

A wandering, careless, wretched, merry race,  
Who cheerful looks assume, and play the parts  
Of happy rovers with repining hearts;  
Then cast off care, and in the mimic pain  
Of tragic wo, feel spirits light and vain,  
Distress and hope—the mind's, the body's  
wear,

The man's affliction, and the actor's tear:  
Alternate times of fasting and excess  
Are yours, ye smiling children of distress.

Slaves though ye be, your wandering free-  
dom seems,

And with your varying views and restless  
schemes,

Your griefs are transient, as your joys are  
dreams.

Yet keen those griefs—ah! what avail thy  
charms,

Fair Juliet! what that infant in thine arms;  
What those heroic lines thy patience learns,

What all the aid thy present Romeo earns,  
Whilst thou art crowded in that lumbering  
wain,

With all thy plaintive sisters to complain?

Nor is there lack of labour—To rehearse,  
Day after day, poor scraps of prose and verse;  
To bear each other's spirit, pride, and spite;  
To hide in rant the heart-ache of the night;  
To dress in gaudy patch-work, and to force  
The mind to think on the appointed course;—  
This is laborious, and may be defined  
The bootless labour of the thriftless mind.

There is a veteran dame; I see her stand  
Intent and pensive with her book in hand;  
Awhile her thoughts she forces on her part,  
Then dwells on objects nearer to the heart;  
Across the room she paces, gets her tone,  
And fits her features for the Danish throne;  
To-night a queen—I mark her motion slow,  
I hear her speech, and Hamlet's mother know.

Methinks 'tis pitiful to see her try  
For strength of arms and energy of eye;  
With vigour lost, and spirits worn away,  
Her pomp and pride she labours to display;  
And when awhile she's tried her part to act,  
To find her thoughts arrested by some fact;  
When struggles more and more severe are  
seen

In the plain actress than the Danish queen,—  
At length she feels her part, she finds delight,  
And fancies all the plaudits of the night:

Old as she is, she smiles at every speech,  
And thinks no youthful part beyond her reach;  
But as the mist of vanity again  
Is blown away, by press of present pain,  
Sad and in doubt she to her purse applies  
For cause of comfort, where no comfort lies;  
Then to her task she sighing turns again,—  
'Oh! Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in  
twain!'

And who that poor, consumptive, wither'd  
thing,  
Who strains her slender throat and strives to  
sing?

Panting for breath, and forced her voice to  
drop,

And far unlike the inmate of the shop,  
Where she, in youth and health, alert and gay,  
Laugh'd off at night the labours of the day;  
With novels, verses, fancy's fertile powers,  
And sister-converse pass'd the evening-hours;  
But Cynthia's soul was soft, her wishes strong,  
Her judgment weak, and her conclusions  
wrong:

The morning-call and counter were her dread,  
And her contempt the needle and the thread:  
But when she read a gentle damsel's part,  
Her wo, her wish!—she had them all by heart.

At length the hero of the boards drew nigh,  
Who spake of love till sigh re-echo'd sigh;  
He told in honey'd words his deathless flame,  
And she his own by tender vows became;  
Nor ring nor licence needed souls so fond,  
Alphonso's passion was his Cynthia's bond:  
And thus the simple girl, to shame betray'd,  
Sinks to the grave forsaken and dismay'd.

Sick without pity, sorrowing without hope,  
See her! the grief and scandal of the troop;  
A wretched martyr to a childish pride,  
Her wo insulted, and her praise denied:  
Her humble talents, though derided, used,  
Her prospects lost, her confidence abused;  
All that remains—for she not long can brave  
Increase of evils—is an early grave.

Ye gentle Cynthia's of the shop, take heed  
What dreams ye cherish and what books ye  
read.

A decent sum had Peter Nottage made,  
By joining bricks—to him a thriving trade:  
Of his employment master and his wife,  
This humble tradesman led a lordly life;  
The house of kings and heroes lack'd repairs,  
And Peter, though reluctant, served the  
players:

Connected thus, he heard in way polite,—  
'Come, Master Nottage, see us play to-night.'  
At first 'twas folly, nonsense, idle stuff,  
But seen for nothing it grew well enough;  
And better now—now best, and every night,  
In this fool's paradise he drank delight;  
And as he felt the bliss, he wish'd to know  
Whence all this rapture and these joys could  
flow;

For if the seeing could such pleasure bring,  
What must the feeling?—feeling like a king?

In vain his wife, his uncle, and his friend,  
Cried—'Peter! Peter! let such follies end;  
'Tis well enough these vagabonds to see,  
But would you partner with a showman be?'  
'Showman!' said Peter, 'did not Quin  
and Clive,

And Roscius-Garrick, by the science thrive?  
Showman!—'tis scandal; I'm by genius led  
To join a class who've Shakspeare at their  
head.'

Poor Peter thus by easy steps became  
A dreaming candidate for scenic fame,  
And, after years consumed, infirm and poor,  
He sits and takes the tickets at the door.

Of various men these marching troops are  
made,—

Pen-spurning clerks, and lads contemning  
trade;

Waiters and servants by confinement eased,  
And youths of wealth by dissipation ceased;  
With feeling nymphs, who, such resource at  
hand,

Scorn to obey the rigour of command;  
Some, who from higher views by vice are won,  
And some of either sex by love undone;  
The greater part lamenting as their fall,  
What some an honour and advancement call.

There are who names in shame or fear  
assume,

And hence our Bevilles and our Savilles come;  
It honours him, from tailor's board kick'd  
down,

As Mister Dormer to amuse the town;  
Falling, he rises: but a kind there are  
Who dwell on former prospects, and despair;  
Justly but vainly their fate deplore,  
And mourn their fall who fell to rise no more.

Our merchant Thompson, with his sons  
around,

Most mind and talent in his Frederick found:  
He was so lively, that his mother knew,  
If he were taught, that honour must ensue;

The father's views were in a different line,  
But if at college he were sure to shine,  
Then should he go—to prosper who could  
doubt?

When school-boy stigmas would be all wash'd  
out;

For there were marks upon his youthful face,  
'Twixt vice and error—a neglected case—  
These would submit to skill; a little time,  
And none could trace the error or the crime;  
Then let him go, and once at college, he  
Might choose his station—what would  
Frederick be?

'Twas soon determined—He could not  
descend

To pedant-laws and lectures without end;  
And then the chapel—night and morn to pray,  
Or mulct and threaten'd if he kept away;  
No! not to be a bishop—so he swore,  
And at his college he was seen no more.

His debts all paid, the father, with a sigh,  
Placed him in office—'Do, my Frederick, try;  
Confineth thyself a few short months, and  
then——'

He tried a fortnight, and threw down the pen.

Again demands were hush'd: 'My son,  
you're free,

But you're unsettled; take your chance at  
sea.'

So in few days the midshipman equipp'd,  
Received the mother's blessing and was  
shipp'd.

Hard was her fortune; soon compell'd to  
meet

The wretched stripling staggering through the  
street;

For, rash, impetuous, insolent and vain,  
The captain sent him to his friends again:  
About the borough roved th' unhappy boy,  
And ate the bread of every chance-employ;  
Of friends he borrow'd, and the parents yet  
In secret fondness authorised the debt;  
The younger sister, still a child, was taught  
To give with feign'd affright the pittance  
sought;

For now the father cried—'It is too late  
For trial more—I leave him to his fate,'—  
Yet left him not; and with a kind of joy  
The mother heard of her desponding boy:  
At length he sicken'd, and he found, when sick,  
All aid was ready, all attendance quick;  
A fever seized him, and at once was lost  
The thought of trespass, error, crime and cost;

Th' indulgent parents knelt beside the youth,  
They heard his promise and believed his truth;  
And when the danger lessen'd on their view,  
They cast off doubt, and hope assurance  
grew;—

Nursed by his sisters, cherish'd by his sire,  
Begg'd to be glad, encouraged to aspire,  
His life, they said, would now all care repay,  
And he might date his prospects from that  
day;

A son, a brother to his home received,  
They hoped for all things, and in all believed.

And now will pardon, comfort, kindness,  
draw

The youth from vice? will honour, duty, law?

Alas! not all: the more the trials lent,  
The less he seem'd to ponder and repent;  
Headstrong, determined in his own career,  
He thought reproof unjust and truth severe;  
The soul's disease was to its crisis come,  
He first abused and then abjured his home;  
And when he chose a vagabond to be,  
He made his shame his glory—'I'll be free.'

Friends, parents, relatives, hope, reason,  
love,

With anxious ardour for that empire strove;  
In vain their strife, in vain the means applied,  
They had no comfort, but that all were tried;  
One strong vain trial made, the mind to move,  
Was the last effort of parental love.

Ev'n then he watch'd his father from his  
home,

And to his mother would for pity come,  
Where, as he made her tender terrors rise,  
He talk'd of death, and threaten'd for supplies.

Against a youth so vicious and undone,  
All hearts were closed, and every door but one:  
The players received him, they with open  
heart.

Gave him his portion and assign'd his part;  
And ere three days were added to his life,  
He found a home, a duty, and a wife.

His present friends, though they were  
nothing nice,

Nor ask'd how vicious he, or what his vice,  
Still they expected he should now attend  
To the joint duty as an useful friend;  
The leader too declared, with frown severe,  
That none should pawn a robe that kings  
might wear;

And much it moved him, when he Hamlet  
play'd,

To see his Father's Ghost so drunken made:

Then too the temper, the unbending pride  
Of this ally would no reproof abide :—  
So leaving these, he march'd away and join'd  
Another troop, and other goods purloin'd ;  
And other characters, both gay and sage,  
Sober and sad, made stagger on the stage ;  
Then to rebuke, with arrogant disdain,  
He gave abuse and sought a home again.

Thus changing scenes, but with unchanging  
vice,

Engaged by many, but with no one twice :  
Of this, a last and poor resource, bereft,  
He to himself, unhappy guide : was left—  
And who shall say where guided ? to what  
seats

Of starving villany ? of thieves and cheats ?

In that sad time of many a dismal scene  
Had he a witness (not inactive) been ;  
Had leagued with petty pilferers, and had crept  
Where of each sex degraded numbers slept :  
With such associates he was long allied,  
Where his capacity for ill was tried,  
And that once lost, the wretch was cast aside :  
For now, though willing with the worst to act,  
He wanted powers for an important fact ;  
And while he felt as lawless spirits feel,  
His hand was palsied, and he couldn't steal.

By these rejected, is there lot so strange,  
So low ! that he could suffer by the change ?  
Yes ! the new station as a fall we judge,—  
He now became the harlots' humble drudge,  
Their drudge in common : they combined to  
save

Awhile from starving their submissive slave ;  
For now his spirit left him, and his pride,  
His scorn, his rancour, and resentment died ;  
Few were his feelings—but the keenest these,  
The rage of hunger, and the sigh for ease ;  
He who abused indulgence, now became  
By want subservient and by misery tame ;  
A slave, he begg'd forbearance ; bent with  
pain,  
He shunn'd the blow,—‘ Ah ! strike me not  
again.’

Thus was he found : the master of a hoy  
Saw the sad wretch, whom he had known a  
boy ;

At first in doubt, but Frederick laid aside  
All shame, and humbly for his aid applied :

He, tamed and smitten with the storms gone  
by,

Look'd for compassion through one living eye,  
And stretch'd th' unpalsied hand : the sea-  
man felt

His honest heart with gentle pity melt,  
And his small boon with cheerful frankness  
dealt ;

Then made inquiries of th' unhappy youth,  
Who told, nor shame forbade him, all the  
truth.

‘ Young Frederick Thompson to a chand-  
ler's shop

By harlots order'd and afraid to stop !—

What ! our good merchant's favourite to be  
seen

In state so loathsome and in dress so mean ?’—

So thought the seaman as he bade adieu,  
And, when in port, related all he knew.

But time was lost, inquiry came too late,  
Those whom he served knew nothing of his  
fate ;

No ! they had seized on what the sailor gave,  
Nor bore resistance from their abject slave ;  
‘ The spoil obtain'd, they cast him from the  
door,

Robb'd, beaten, hungry, pain'd, diseased and  
poor.

Then nature (pointing to the only spot  
Which still had comfort for so dire a lot,)  
Although so feeble, led him on the way,  
And hope look'd forward to a happier day :  
He thought, poor prodigal ! a father yet  
His woes would pity and his crimes forget ;  
Nor had he brother who with speech severe  
Would check the pity or refrain the tear :  
A lighter spirit in his bosom rose,  
As near the road he sought an hour's repose.

And there he found it: he had left the  
town,

But buildings yet were scatter'd up and down ;  
To one of these, half-ruin'd and half-built,  
Was traced this child of wretchedness and  
guilt ;

There on the remnant of a beggar's vest,  
Thrown by in scorn ! the sufferer sought for  
rest ;

There was this scene of vice and woe to close,  
And there the wretched body found repose.

## LETTER XIII. THE ALMS-HOUSE AND TRUSTEES

Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.

POPE, *Epilogue to Satires*, line 136.

There are a sort of men whose visages  
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,  
And do a wilful stillness entertain,  
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion;

As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,  
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark.'

*Merchant of Venice*, Act i, Sc. 1.

Sum felix; quis enim neget? felixque  
manebo;

Hoc quoque quis dubitet? Tutum me copia  
fecit.

The frugal Merchant—Rivalship in Modes  
of Frugality—Private Exceptions to the  
general Manners—Alms-House built—Its  
Description—Founder dies—Six Trustees  
—Sir Denys Brand, a Principal—His  
Eulogium in the Chronicles of the Day—  
Truth reckoned invidious on these Occa-  
sions—An Explanation of the Magnanimity  
and Wisdom of Sir Denys—His Kinds of  
Moderation and Humility—Laughton, his  
Successor, a planning, ambitious, wealthy  
Man—Advancement in Life his perpetual  
Object, and all Things made the Means of  
it—His Idea of Falsehood—His Resent-  
ment dangerous: how removed—Success  
produces Love of Flattery: his daily  
Gratification—His Merits and Acts of  
Kindness—His proper Choice of Alms-Men  
—In this Respect meritorious—His Pre-  
decessor not so cautious.

LEAVE now our streets, and in yon plain  
behold

Those pleasant seats for the reduced and old;  
A merchant's gift, whose wife and children  
died,

When he to saving all his powers applied;  
He wore his coat till bare was every thread,  
And with the meanest fare his body fed.

He had a female cousin, who with care  
Walk'd in his steps and learn'd of him to spare;  
With emulation and success they strove,  
Improving still, still seeking to improve,  
As if that useful knowledge they would gain—  
How little food would human life sustain:  
No pauper came their table's crumbs to crave;  
Scraping they lived, but not a scrap they gave:

When beggars saw the frugal merchant pass,  
It moved their pity, and they said, 'Alas!  
Hard is thy fate, my brother,' and they felt  
A beggar's pride as they that pity dealt:  
The dogs, who learn of man to scorn the poor,  
Bark'd him away from ev'ry decent door;  
While they who saw him bare, but thought  
him rich,

To show respect or scorn, they knew not  
which.

But while our merchant seem'd so base  
and mean,

He had his wanderings, sometimes, 'not  
unseen;'

To give in secret was a favourite act,  
Yet more than once they took him in the fact:  
To scenes of various woe he nightly went,  
And serious sums in healing misery spent;  
Oft has he cheer'd the wretched, at a rate  
For which he daily might have dined on plate;  
He has been seen—his hair all silver-white,  
Shaking and shining—as he stole by night,  
To feed unenvied on his still delight.

A two-fold taste he had; to give and spare,  
Both were his duties, and had equal care;  
It was his joy, to sit alone and fast,  
Then send a widow and her boys repast:  
Tears in his eyes would, spite of him, appear,  
But he from other eyes has kept the tear:  
All in a wint'ry night from far he came,  
To soothe the sorrows of a suffering dame;  
Whose husband robb'd him, and to whom he  
meant

A ling'ring, but reforming punishment:  
Homethen he walk'd, and found his anger rise,  
When fire and rush-light met his troubled  
eyes;

But these extinguish'd, and his prayer ad-  
dress'd

To Heaven in hope, he calmly sank to rest.  
His seventieth year was pass'd, and then  
was seen

A building rising on the northern green;  
There was no blinding all his neighbours' eyes,  
Or surely no one would have seen it rise:

Twelve rooms contiguous stood, and six were  
near,

There men were placed, and sober matrons  
here;

There were behind small useful gardens made,  
Benches before, and trees to give them shade;  
In the first room were seen, above, below,  
Some marks of taste, a few attempts at show;  
The founder's picture and his arms were there,  
(Not till he left us,) and an elbow'd chair;  
There, 'mid these signs of his superior place,  
Sat the mild ruler of this humble race.

Within the row are men who strove in vain,  
Through years of trouble, wealth and ease  
to gain;

Less must they have than an appointed sum,  
And freemen been, or hither must not come;  
They should be decent and command respect,  
(Though needing fortune,) whom these doors  
protect,

And should for thirty dismal years have tried  
For peace unfelt and competence denied.

Strange! that o'er men thus train'd in  
sorrow's school,

Power must be held, and they must live by  
rule;

Infirm, corrected by misfortunes, old,  
Their habits settled and their passions cold;  
Of health, wealth, power, and worldly cares,  
bereft,

Still must they not at liberty be left;  
There must be one to rule them, to restrain  
And guide the movements of his erring train.

If then control imperious, check severe,  
Be needed where such reverend men appear;  
To what would youth, without such checks,  
aspire,

Free the wild wish, uncurb'd the strong desire?  
And where (in college or in camp) they found  
The heart ungovern'd and the hand unbound?

His house endow'd, the generous man  
resign'd

All power to rule, nay power of choice declined;  
He and the female saint survived to view  
Their work complete, and bade the world  
adieu!

Six are the guardians of this happy seat,  
And one presides when they on business meet;  
As each expires, the five a brother choose;  
Nor would Sir Denys Brand the charge refuse;  
True, 'twas beneath him, 'but to do men good  
Was motive never by his heart withstood.'  
He too is gone, and they again must strive  
To find a man in whom his gifts survive.

Now, in the various records of the dead,  
Thy worth, Sir Denys, shall be weigh'd and  
read;

There we the glory of thy house shall trace,  
With each alliance of thy noble race.

Yes! here we have him!—'Came in  
William's reign,

The Norman-Brand; the blood without a  
stain;

From the fierce Dane and ruder Saxon clear,  
Pict, Irish, Scot, or Cambrian mountaineer;  
But the pure Norman was the sacred spring,  
And he, Sir Denys, was in heart a king:  
Erect in person and so firm in soul,  
Fortune he seem'd to govern and control;  
Generous as he who gives his all away,  
Prudent as one who toils for weekly pay;  
In him all merits were decreed to meet,  
Sincere though cautious, frank and yet dis-  
creet,

Just all his dealings, faithful every word,  
His passions' master, and his temper's lord.'

Yet more, kind dealers in decaying fame?  
His magnanimity you next proclaim;  
You give him learning, join'd with sound  
good sense,

And match his wealth with his benevolence;  
What hides the multitude of sins, you add,  
Yet seem to doubt if sins he ever had.

Poor honest Truth! thou writ'st of living  
men,

And art a railer and detractor then;  
They die, again to be described, and now  
A foe to merit and mankind art thou!

Why banish truth? it injures not the dead,  
It aids not them with flattery to be fed;  
And when mankind such perfect pictures  
view,

They copy less, the more they think them true.  
Let us a mortal as he was behold,  
And see the dross adhering to the gold;  
When we the errors of the virtuous state,  
Then erring men their worth may emulate.

View then this picture of a noble mind,  
Let him be wise, magnanimous, and kind;  
What was the wisdom? Was it not the frown  
That keeps all question, all inquiry down?  
His words were powerful and decisive all,  
But his slow reasons came for no man's call.  
'Tis thus,' he cried, no doubt with kind  
intent,

To give results and spare all argument:—  
'Let it be spared—all men at least agree  
Sir Denys Brand had magnanimity:  
His were no vulgar charities; none saw  
Him like the merchant to the hut withdraw;



He left to meaner minds the simple deed,  
By which the houseless rest, the hungry feed;  
His was a public bounty vast and grand,  
'Twas not in him to work with viewless hand;  
He raised the room that towers above the street,

A public room where grateful parties meet;  
He first the life boat plann'd; to him the place

Is deep in debt—'twas he revived the race;  
To every public act this hearty friend  
Would give with freedom or with frankness lend;

His money built the jail, nor prisoner yet  
Sits at his ease, but he must feel the debt;  
To these let candour add his vast display,  
Around his mansion all is grand and gay,  
And this is bounty with the name of pay.'

I grant the whole, nor from one deed retract,

But wish recorded too the private act;  
All these were great, but still our hearts approve

Those simpler tokens of the christian love;  
'Twould give me joy some gracious deed to meet,

That has not call'd for glory through the street:

Who felt for many, could not always shun,  
In some soft moment, to be kind to one;  
And yet they tell us, when Sir Denys died,  
That not a widow in the Borough sigh'd;  
Great were his gifts, his mighty heart I own,  
But why describe what all the world has known?

The rest is petty pride, the useless art  
Of a vain mind to hide a swelling heart:  
Small was his private room; men found him there

By a plain table, on a paltry chair;  
A wretched floor-cloth, and some prints around,

The easy purchase of a single pound:  
These humble trifles and that study small  
Make a strong contrast with the servants' hall;

There barely comfort, here a proud excess,  
The pompous seat of pamper'd idleness,  
Where the sleek rogues with one consent declare,

They would not live upon his honour's fare;  
He daily took but one half-hour to dine,  
On one poor dish and some three sips of wine;

Then he'd abuse them for their sumptuous feasts,

And say, 'My friends! you make yourselves like beasts;

One dish suffices any man to dine,  
But you are greedy as a herd of swine;  
Learn to be temperate.'—Had they dared t' obey,

He would have praised and turn'd them all away.

Friends met Sir Denys riding in his ground,  
And there the meekness of his spirit found:  
For that grey coat, not new for many a year,  
Hides all that would like decent dress appear;  
An old brown pony 'twas his will to ride,  
Who shuffled onward, and from side to side;  
A five-pound purchase, but so fat and sleek,  
His very plenty made the creature weak.

'Sir Denys Brand! and on so poor a steed!'

'Poor! it may be—such things I never heed.'  
And who that youth behind, of pleasant mien,  
Equipp'd as one who wishes to be seen,  
Upon a horse, twice victor for a plate,  
A noble hunter, bought at dearest rate?—  
Him the lad fearing, yet resolved to guide,  
He curbs his spirit, while he strokes his pride.

'A handsome youth, Sir Denys; and a horse

Of finer figure never trod the course,—  
Yours, without question?'—'Yes! I think a groom

Bought me the beast; I cannot say the sum:  
I ride him not, it is a foolish pride  
Men have in cattle—but my people ride;  
The boy is—hark ye, sirrah! what's your name?

Ay, Jacob, yes! I recollect—the same;  
As I bethink me now, a tenant's son—  
I think a tenant—is your father one?'

There was an idle boy who ran about,  
And found his master's humble spirit out;  
He would at awful distance snatch a look,  
Then run away and hide him in some nook;  
'For oh!' quoth he, 'I dare not fix my sight  
On him, his grandeur puts me in a fright;  
Oh! Mister Jacob, when you wait on him,  
Do you not quake and tremble every limb?'

The steward soon had orders—'Summers, see

That Sam be clothed, and let him wait on me.'

Sir Denys died, bequeathing all affairs  
In trust to Laughton's long experienced cares;

Before a guardian, and Sir Denys dead,  
All rule and power devolved upon his head:  
Numbers are call'd to govern, but in fact  
Only the powerful and assuming act.

Laughton, too wise to be a dupe to fame,  
Cared not a whit of what descent he came,  
Till he was rich; he then conceived the  
thought

To fish for pedigree, but never caught:  
All his desire, when he was young and poor,  
Was to advance; he never cared for more:  
'Let me buy, sell, be factor, take a wife,  
Take any road to get along in life.'

Was he a miser then? a robber? foe  
To those who trusted? a deceiver?—No!  
He was ambitious; all his powers of mind  
Were to one end controll'd, improved, combin'd;

Wit, learning, judgment, were, by his account,  
Steps for the ladder he design'd to mount:  
Such step was money: wealth was but his  
slave,

For power he gain'd it, and for power he gave;  
Full well the Borough knows that he'd the art  
Of bringing money to the surest mart;  
Friends too were aids, they led to certain ends,  
Increase of power and claim on other friends.  
A favourite step was marriage: then he gain'd  
Seat in our hall, and o'er his party reign'd;  
Houses and lands he bought, and long'd to  
buy,

But never drew the springs of purchase dry,  
And thus at last they answer'd every call,  
The failing found him ready for their fall:  
He walks along the street, the mart, the quay,  
And looks and mutters, 'This belongs to me.'  
His passions all partook the general bent;  
Interest inform'd him when he should resent,  
How long resist, and on what terms relent:  
In points where he determined to succeed,  
In vain might reason or compassion plead;  
But gain'd his point, he was the best of men,  
'Twas loss of time to be vexatious then:  
Hence he was mild to all men whom he led,  
Of all who dared resist the scourge and dread.

Falsehood in him was not the useless lie  
Of boasting pride or laughing vanity;  
It was the gainful, the persuading art,  
That made its way and won the doubting  
heart

Which argued, soften'd, humbled, and pre-  
vail'd;

Nor was it tried till ev'ry truth had fail'd;

No sage on earth could more than he despise  
Degrading, poor, unprofitable lies.

Though fond of gain, and grieved by  
wanton waste,

To social parties he had no distaste;  
With one presiding purpose in his view,  
He sometimes could descend to trifle too!  
Yet, in these moments, he had still the art  
To ope the looks and close the guarded heart;  
And, like the public host, has sometimes made  
A grand repast, for which the guests have paid.

At length, with power endued and wealthy  
grown,

Frailties and passions, long suppress'd, were  
shown;

Then to provoke him was a dangerous thing,  
His pride would punish, and his temper sting;  
His powerful hatred sought th' avenging  
hour,

And his proud vengeance struck with all his  
power,

Save when th' offender took a prudent way  
The rising storm of fury to allay:

This might he do, and so in safety sleep,  
By largely casting to the angry deep;  
Or, better yet (its swelling force t' assuage,)  
By pouring oil of flattery on its rage.

And now, of all the heart approved,  
possess'd,

Fear'd, favour'd, follow'd, dreaded, and  
caress'd,

He gently yields to one mellifluous joy,  
The only sweet that is not found to cloy,  
Bland adulation! other pleasures pall  
On the sick taste, and transient are they all;  
But this one sweet has such enchanting power,  
The more we take, the faster we devour;  
Nauseous to those who must the dose apply,  
And most disgusting to the standers-by;  
Yet in all companies will Laughton feed,  
Nor care how grossly men perform the deed.

As gapes the nursing, or, what comes more  
near,

Some Friendly-island chief, for hourly cheer;  
When wives and slaves, attending round his  
seat,

Prepare by turns the masticated meat:  
So for this master, husband, parent, friend,  
His ready slaves their various efforts blend,  
And, to their lord still eagerly inclined,  
Pour the crude trash of a dependant mind.

But let the muse assign the man his due;  
Worth he possess'd, nor were his virtues few;—

He sometimes help'd the injured in their  
cause ;  
His power and purse have back'd the failing  
laws ;  
He for religion has a due respect,  
And all his serious notions are correct ;  
Although he pray'd and languish'd for a son,  
He grew resign'd when Heaven demed him  
one ;  
He never to this quiet mansion sends  
Subject unfit, in compliment to friends :  
Not so Sir Denys, who would yet protest  
He always chose the worthiest and the best ;

Notmen in trade by various loss brought down,  
But those whose glory once amazed the town,  
Who their last guinea in their pleasures spent,  
Yet never fell so low as to repent ;  
To these his pity he could largely deal,  
Wealth they had known, and therefore want  
could feel.

Three seats were vacant while Sir Denys  
reign'd,  
And three such favourites their admission  
gain'd ;  
These let us view, still more to understand  
The moral feelings of Sir Denys Brand.

## LETTER XIV. INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE

## BLANEY

Sed quam caecus inest vitlis amor ! Omne  
futurum  
Despicitur, suadentque brevem praesentia  
fructum,  
Et ruit in vetitum damni secunda libido.

CLAUDIAN, *In Eutrop.* lib. ii. 50-2.

Nunquam parvo contenta paratu  
Et quaesitorum terra pelagoque ciborum  
Ambitiosa fames et lautae gloria mensae.  
LUCAN, *De Bell. Civ.* (or *Phars.*), lib. iv.  
371-6.

Et Luxus, populator opum, quem semper  
adhaerens,  
Infelix humili gressu comitatur Egestas.

CLAUDIAN, *In Rufinum*, lib. i. 35-6.

Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend !  
POPE, *Moral Essays*, Ep. iii. 297.

Blaney, a wealthy heir, dissipated, and  
reduced to Poverty—His Fortune restored  
by Marriage : again consumed—His Man-  
ner of living in the West Indies—Recalled  
to a larger Inheritance—His more refined  
and expensive Luxuries—His Method of  
quieting Conscience—Death of his Wife—  
Again become poor—His Method of sup-  
porting Existence—His Ideas of Religion  
—His Habits and Connexions when old—  
Admitted into the Alms-House.

OBSERVE that tall pale veteran ! what a look  
Of shame and guilt ! who cannot read that  
book ?

Misery and mirth are blended in his face,  
Much innate vileness and some outward grace ;

There wishes strong and stronger griefs are seen,  
Looks ever changed, and never one serene :  
Show not that manner, and these features all,  
The serpent's cunning and the sinner's fall ?

Hark to that laughter !—'tis the way he takes  
To force applause for each vile jest he makes ;  
Such is yon man, by partial favour sent  
To these calm seats to ponder and repent.

Blaney, a wealthy heir at twenty-one,  
At twenty-five was ruin'd and undone :  
These years with grievous crimes we need  
not load,

He found his ruin in the common road ;—  
Gamed without skill, without inquiry bought,  
Lent without love, and borrow'd without  
thought.

But, gay and handsome, he had soon the  
dower

Of a kind wealthy widow in his power :  
Then he aspired to loftier flights of vice,  
To singing harlots of enormous price :  
He took a jockey in his gig to buy  
A horse, so valued, that a duke was shy :  
To gain the plaudits of the knowing few,  
Gamblers and grooms, what would not  
Blaney do ?

His dearest friend, at that improving age  
Was Hounslow Dick, who drove the western  
stage.

Cruel he was not—If he left his wife,  
He left her to her own pursuits in life ;  
Deaf to reports, to all expenses blind,  
Profuse, not just, and careless, but not kind.

Yet thus assisted, ten long winters pass'd  
In wasting guineas ere he saw his last ;

Then he began to reason, and to feel  
 He could not dig, nor had he learn'd to steal;  
 And should he beg as long as he might live,  
 He justly fear'd that nobody would give:  
 But he could charge a pistol, and at will,  
 All that was mortal, by a bullet kill:  
 And he was taught, by those whom he would call  
 Man's surest guides—that he was mortal all.

While thus he thought, still waiting for the  
 day,

When he should dare to blow his brains away,  
 A place for him a kind relation found,  
 Where England's monarch ruled, but far  
 from English ground;  
 He gave employ that might for bread suffice,  
 Correct his habits and restrain his vice.

Here Blaney tried (what such man's  
 miseries teach)

To find what pleasures were within his reach;  
 These he enjoy'd, though not in just the style  
 He once possess'd them in his native isle;  
 Congenial souls he found in every place,  
 Vice in all soils, and charms in every race:  
 His lady took the same amusing way,  
 And laugh'd at Time till he had turn'd them  
 grey:

At length for England once again they steer'd,  
 By ancient views and new designs endear'd;  
 His kindred died, and Blaney now became  
 An heir to one who never heard his name.

What could he now?—The man had tried  
 before

The joys of youth, and they were joys no  
 more;

To vicious pleasure he was still inclined,  
 But vice must now be season'd and refined;  
*Then* as a swine he would on pleasure seize,  
 Now common pleasures had no power to  
 please:

Beauty alone has for the vulgar charms,  
 He wanted beauty trembling with alarms:  
 His was no more a youthful dream of joy,  
 The wretch desired to ruin and destroy;  
 He bought indulgence with a boundless price,  
 Most pleased when decency bow'd down to  
 vice,

When a fair dame her husband's honour sold,  
 And a frail countess play'd for Blaney's gold.

'But did not conscience in her anger rise?'

Yes! and he learn'd her terrors to despise;  
 When stung by thought, to soothing books he  
 fled,

And grew composed and harden'd as he read;

Tales of Voltaire, and essays gay and slight,  
 Pleas'd him and shone with their phosphoric  
 light;

Which, though it rose from objects vile and  
 base,

Where'er it came threw splendour on the place,  
 And was that light which the deluded youth,  
 And this grey sinner, deem'd the light of truth.

He different works for different cause  
 admir'd,

Some fix'd his judgment, some his passions  
 fir'd;

To cheer the mind and raise a dormant flame,  
 He had the books, decreed to lasting shame,  
 Which those who read are careful not to name:  
 These won to vicious act the yielding heart,  
 And then the cooler reasoners soothed the  
 smart.

He heard of Blount, and Mandeville, and  
 Chubb,

How they the doctors of their day would drub;  
 How Hume had dwelt on miracles so well,  
 That none would now believe a miracle;  
 And though he cared not works so grave to  
 read,

He caught their faith and sign'd the sinner's  
 creed.

Thus was he pleas'd to join the laughing side,  
 Nor ceased the laughter when his lady died;  
 Yet was he kind and careful of her fame,  
 And on her tomb inscribed a virtuous name;  
 'A tender wife, respected, and so forth,'—  
 The marble still bears witness to the worth.

He has some children, but he knows not  
 where;

Something they cost, but neither love nor care;  
 A father's feelings he has never known,  
 His joys, his sorrows, have been all his own.

He now would build—and lofty seat he  
 built,

And sought, in various ways, relief from guilt.  
 Restless, for ever anxious to obtain  
 Ease for the heart by ramblings of the brain,  
 He would have pictures, and of course a taste,  
 And found a thousand means his wealth to  
 waste.

Newmarket steeds he bought at mighty cost;  
 They sometimes won, but Blaney always lost.

Quick came his ruin, came when he had still  
 For life a relish, and in pleasure skill:

By his own idle reckoning he supposed  
 His wealth would last him till his life was  
 closed;

But no ! he found his final hoard was spent,  
While he had years to suffer and repent.  
Yet at the last, his noble mind to show,  
And in his misery how he bore the blow,  
He view'd his only guinea, then suppress'd,  
For a short time, the tumults in his breast,  
And, moved by pride, by habit and despair,  
Gave it an opera-bird to hum an air.

Come ye ! who live for pleasure, come,  
behold

A man of pleasure when he's poor and old ;  
When he looks back through life, and cannot find

A single action to relieve his mind ;  
When he looks forward, striving still to keep  
A steady prospect of eternal sleep ;  
When not one friend is left, of all the train  
Whom 'twas his pride and boast to entertain,—  
Friends now employ'd from house to house  
to run

And say, ' Alas ! poor Blaney is undone ! '—  
Those whom he shook with ardour by the hand,  
By whom he stood as long as he could stand,  
Who seem'd to him from all deception clear,  
And who, more strange ! might think themselves sincere.

Lo ! now the hero shuffling through the town,

To hunt a dinner and to beg a crown ;  
To tell an idle tale, that boys may smile ;  
To bear a strumpet's billet-doux a mile ;  
To cull a wanton for a youth of wealth,  
(With reverend view to both his taste and health) :

To be a useful, needy thing between  
Fear and desire—the pander and the screen ;  
To flatter pictures, houses, horses, dress,  
The wildest fashion or the worst excess ;  
To be the grey seducer, and entice  
Unbearded folly into acts of vice ;  
And then, to level every fence which law  
And virtue fix to keep the mind in awe,  
He first inveigles youth to walk astray,  
Next prompts and soothes them in their fatal way,

Then vindicates the deed, and makes the mind his prey.

Unhappy man ! what pains he takes to state—

(Proof of his fear !) that all below is fate ;  
That all proceed in one appointed track,  
Where none can stop, or take their journey back :

Then what is vice or virtue ?—Yet he'll rail  
At priests till memory and quotation fail ;  
Hereads, to learn the various ills they've done,  
And calls them vipers, every mother's son.

He is the harlot's aid, who wheedling tries  
To move her friend for vanity's supplies ;  
To weak indulgence he allures the mind,  
Loth to be duped, but willing to be kind ;  
And if successful—what the labour pays ?  
He gets the friend's contempt and Chloe's praise,

Who, in her triumph, condescends to say,  
' What a good creature Blaney was to-day ! '

Hear the poor daemon when the young attend,

And willing ear to vile experience lend ;  
When he relates (with laughing, leering eye)  
The tale licentious, mix'd with blasphemy:  
No genuine gladness his narrations cause,  
The frailest heart denies sincere applause ;  
And many a youth has turn'd him half aside,  
And laugh'd aloud, the sign of shame to hide.

Blaney, no aid in his vile cause to lose,  
Buys pictures, prints, and a licentious muse ;  
He borrows every help from every art,  
To stir the passions and mislead the heart :  
But from the subject let us soon escape,  
Nor give this feature all its ugly shape :  
Some to their crimes escape from satire owe ;  
Who shall describe what Blaney dares to show ?

While thus the man, to vice and passion slave,

Was, with his follies, moving to the grave,  
The ancient ruler of this mansion died,  
And Blaney boldly for the seat applied ;  
Sir Denys Brand, then guardian, join'd his suit ;

' 'Tis true,' said he, ' the fellow's quite a brute—

A very beast ; but yet, with all his sin,  
He has a manner—let the devil in.'

They half complied, they gave the wish'd retreat, -

But raised a worthier, to the vacant seat.

Thus forced on ways unlike each former way,

Thus led to prayer without a heart to pray,  
He quits the gay and rich, the young and free,

Among the badge-men with a badge to be :  
He sees an humble tradesman raised to rule  
The grey-beard pupils of this moral school ;

Where he himself, an old licentious boy,  
Will nothing learn, and nothing can enjoy;  
In temp'rate measures he must eat and drink,  
And, pain of pains! must live alone and think.

In vain, by fortune's smiles, thrice affluent  
made,  
Still has he debts of ancient date unpaid;

Thrice into penury by error thrown,  
Not one right maxim has he made his own;  
The old men shun him,—some his vices  
hate,

And all abhor his principles and prate;  
Nor love nor care for him will mortal show,  
Save a frail sister in the female row.

## LETTER XV. INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE

### CLELIA

She early found herself mistress of herself.  
All she did was right: all she said was ad-  
mired. Early, very early, did she dismiss  
blushes from her cheek: she could not blush,  
because she could not doubt; and silence,  
whatever was the subject, was as much a  
stranger to her as diffidence.

RICHARDSON.

Quo fugit Venus? heu! Quove color? decens

Quo motus? Quid habes illius, illius,

Quae spirabat amores,

Quae me surpuerat mihi?

HORATIUS, lib. iv. Od. 13, vv. 17-20.

Her lively and pleasant Manners—Her  
Reading and Decision—Her Intercourse  
with different Classes of Society—Her  
Kind of Character—The favoured Lover  
—Her Management of him: his of her—  
After one Period, Clelia with an Attorney;  
her Manner and Situation there—Another  
such Period, when her Fortune still de-  
clines—Mistress of an Inn—A Widow—  
Another such Interval: she becomes poor  
and infirm, but still vain and frivolous—  
The fallen Vanity—Admitted into the  
House: meets Blaney.

We had a sprightly nymph—in every town  
Are some such sprights, who wander up and  
down;

She had her useful arts, and could contrive,  
In time's despite, to stay at twenty-five;—  
'Here will I rest; move on, thou lying year,  
This is mine age, and I will rest me here.'

Arch was her look, and she had pleasant  
ways

Your good opinion of her heart to raise;  
Her speech was lively, and with ease express'd,  
And well she judged the tempers she ad-  
dress'd;

If some soft stripling had her keenness felt,  
She knew the way to make his anger melt;  
Wit was allow'd her, though but few could  
bring

Direct example of a witty thing;

'Twas that gay, pleasant, smart, engaging  
speech,

Her beaux admired, and just within their  
reach;

Not indiscreet perhaps, but yet more free  
Than prudish nymphs allow their wit to be.

Novels and plays, with poems, old and  
new,

Were all the books our nymph attended to;  
Yet from the press no treatise issued forth,  
But she would speak precisely of its worth.

She with the London stage familiar grew,  
And every actor's name and merit knew;  
She told how this or that their part mistook,  
And of the rival Romeos gave the look;  
Of either house 'twas hers the strength to see,  
Then judge with candour—'Drury-Lane for  
me.'

What made this knowledge, what this skill  
complete?

A fortnight's visit in Whitechapel-street.

Her place in life was rich and poor between,  
With those a favourite, and with these a  
queen;

She could her parts assume, and condescend  
To friends more humble while an humble  
friend;

And thus a welcome, lively guest could pass,  
Threading her pleasant way from class to class.

'Her reputation?'—That was like her wit,  
And seem'd her manner and her state to fit;  
Something there was, what, none presumed  
to say,

(Clouds lightly passing on a smiling day.—  
Whispers and hints which went from ear to ear,  
And mix'd reports no judge on earth could clear.

But of each sex a friendly number press'd  
To joyous banquets this alluring guest :  
There, if indulging mirth, and freed from awe,  
If pleasing all, and pleased with all she saw,  
Her speech were free, and such as freely dwelt  
On the same feelings all around her felt ;  
Or if some fond presuming favourite tried  
To come so near as once to be denied ;  
Yet not with brow so stern or speech so nice,  
But that he ventured on denial twice :—  
If these have been, and so has scandal taught,  
Yet malice never found the proof she sought.

But then came one, the Lovelace of his day,  
Rich, proud, and crafty, handsome, brave,  
and gay ;

Yet loved he not those labour'd plans and arts,  
But left the business to the ladies' hearts,  
And when he found them in a proper train,  
He thought all else superfluous and vain :  
But in that training he was deeply taught,  
And rarely fail'd of gaining all he sought ;  
He knew how far directly on to go,  
How to recede and dally to and fro ;  
How to make all the passions his allies,  
And, when he saw them in contention rise,  
To watch the wrought-up heart, and conquer  
by surprise.

Our heroine fear'd him not ; it was her part,  
To make sure conquest of such gentle heart—  
Of one so mild and humble ; for she saw  
In Henry's eye a love chastised by awe.  
Her thoughts of virtue were not all sublime,  
Nor virtuous all her thoughts ; 'twas now her  
time

To bait each hook, in every way to please,  
And the rich prize with dextrous hand to seize.  
She had no virgin-terrors ; she could stray  
In all love's maze, nor fear to lose her way ;  
Nay, could go near the precipice, nor dread  
A falling caution or a giddy head ;  
She'd fix her eyes upon the roaring flood,  
And dance upon the brink where danger stood.

'Twas nature all, she judged, in one so  
young,

To drop the eye and falter in the tongue ;  
To be about to take, and then command  
His daring wish, and only view the hand :  
Yes ! all was nature ; it became a maid  
Of gentle soul t' encourage love afraid ;—  
He, so unlike the confident and bold,  
Would fly in mute despair to find her cold :  
The young and tender germ requires the sun  
To make it spread ; it must be smiled upon.

Thus the kind virgin gentle means devised,  
To gain a heart so fond, a hand so prized ;  
More gentle still she grew, to change her way,  
Would cause confusion, danger and delay :  
Thus (an increase of gentleness her mode),  
She took a plain, unvaried, certain road,  
And every hour believed success was near,  
Till there was nothing left to hope or fear.

It must be own'd that in this strife of hearts,  
Man has advantage—has superior arts :  
The lover's aim is to the nymph unknown,  
Nor is she always certain of her own ;  
Or has her fears, nor these can so disguise,  
But he who searches, reads them in her eyes,  
In the avenging frown, in the regretting sighs :  
These are his signals, and he learns to steer  
The straighter course whenever they appear.

' Pass we ten years, and what was Clelia's  
fate ? '

At an attorney's board alert she sate,  
Not legal mistress : he with other men  
Once sought her hand, but other views were  
then ;

And when he knew he might the bliss command,  
He other blessing sought, without the hand ;  
For still he felt alive the lambent flame,  
And offer'd her a home,—and home she came.

There, though her higher friendships lived  
no more,  
She loved to speak of what she shared before—  
' Of the dear Lucy, heiress of the hall,—  
Of good Sir Peter,—of their annual ball,  
And the fair countess !—Oh ! she loved them  
all ! '

The humbler clients of her friend would stare,  
The knowing smile,—but neither caused her  
care ;

She brought her spirits to her humble state,  
And soothed with idle dreams her frowning  
fate.

' Ten summers pass'd, and how was Clelia  
then ? '

Alas ! she suffer'd in this trying ten ;  
The pair had parted : who to him attend,  
Must judge the nymph unfaithful to her  
friend ;  
But who on her would equal faith bestow,  
Would think him rash,—and surely she must  
know.

Then as a matron Clelia taught a school,  
But nature gave not talents fit for rule :

Yet now, though marks of wasting years  
were seen,

Some touch of sorrow, some attack of spleen;  
Still there was life, a spirit quick and gay,  
And lively speech and elegant array.

The Griffin's landlord these allured so far,  
He made her mistress of his heart and bar;  
He had no idle retrospective whim,  
Till she was his, her deeds concern'd not him:  
So far was well,—but Clelia thought not fit  
(In all the Griffin needed) to submit:

Gaily to dress and in the bar preside,  
Soothed the poor spirit of degraded pride;  
But cooking, waiting, welcoming a crew  
Of noisy guests, were arts she never knew:  
Hence daily wars, with temporary truce,  
His vulgar insult, and her keen abuse;  
And as their spirits wasted in the strife,  
Both took the Griffin's ready aid of life;  
But she with greater prudence—Harry tried  
More powerful aid, and in the trial died;  
Yet drew down vengeance: in no distant time,  
Th' insolvent Griffin struck his wings sub-  
lime;—

Forth from her palace walk'd th' ejected  
queen,

And show'd to frowning fate a look serene;  
Gay spite of time, though poor, yet well  
attired,

Kind without love, and vain if not admired.

Another term is past; ten other years  
In various trials, troubles, views, and fears:  
Of these some pass'd in small attempts at  
trade;

Houses she kept for widowers lately made;  
For now she said, 'They'll miss th' endearing  
friend,

And I'll be there the soften'd heart to bend.'  
And true a part was done as Clelia plann'd—  
The heart was soften'd, but she miss'd the  
hand.

She wrote a novel, and Sir Denys said,  
The dedication was the best he read;  
But Edgeworths, Spiths, and Radcliffes so  
engross'd

The public ear, that all her pains were lost.  
To keep a toy-shop was attempt the last,  
There too she fail'd, and schemes and hopes  
were past.

Now friendless, sick and old, and wanting  
bread,

The first-born tears of fallen pride were shed—

True, bitter tears; and yet that wounded  
pride,

Among the poor, for poor distinctions sigh'd.  
Though now her tales were to her audience  
fit;

Though loud her tones, and vulgar grown her  
wit;

Though now her dress—(but let me not explain  
The piteous patch-work of the needy-vain,  
The flirtish form to coarse materials lent,  
And one poor robe through fifty fashions  
sent);

Though all within was sad, without was  
mean,—

Still 'twas her wish, her comfort to be seen:  
She would to plays on lowest terms resort,  
Where once her box was to the beaux a court;  
And, strange delight! to that same house,  
where she

Join'd in the dance, all gaiety and glee,  
Now with the menials crowding to the wall,  
She'd see, not share, the pleasures of the ball,  
And with degraded vanity unfold,  
How she too triumph'd in the years of old.

To her poor friends 'tis now her pride to tell  
On what a height she stood before she fell;  
At church she points to one tall seat, and  
'There

We sat,' she cries, 'when my papa was mayor.'  
Not quite correct in what she now relates,  
She alters persons, and she forgets dates;  
And finding memory's weaker help decay'd,  
She boldly calls invention to her aid.

Touch'd by the pity he had felt before,  
For her Sir Denys op'd the alms-house door:  
'With all her faults,' he said, 'the woman  
knew

How to distinguish—had a manner too;  
And, as they say, she is allied to some  
In decent station—let the creature come.'

Here she and Blaney meet, and take their  
view

Of all the pleasures they would still pursue:  
Hour after hour they sit, and nothing hide  
Of vices past; their follies are their pride;  
What to the sober and the cool are crimes,  
They boast—exulting in those happy times;  
The darkest deeds no indignation raise,  
The purest virtue never wins their praise;  
But still they on their ancient joys dilate,  
Still with regret departed glories state,  
And mourn their grievous fall, and curse their  
rigorous fate.



## LETTER XVI. INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE

## BENBOW

Thou art the knight of the Burning Lamp  
 . . . if thou wert any way given to virtue, I  
 would swear by thy face ; my oath should be  
 by this fire. Oh ! thou art a perpetual  
 triumph, . . . thou hast saved me a thousand  
 marks in links and torches, walking with thee  
 in the night betwixt tavern and tavern.  
 SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV*, Part I, Act iii, Sc. 3.

Ebrietas tibi fida comes, tibi Luxus, et atris  
 Circa te semper volitans Infamia pennis.

*Silvius Italicus.*

Benbow, an improper Companion for the  
 Badgemen of the Alms-house—He re-  
 sembles Bardolph—Left in Trade by his  
 Father—Contracts useless Friendships—  
 His Friends drink with him, and employ  
 others—Called worthy and honest ! Why—  
 Effect of Wine on the Mind of Man—  
 Benbow's common Subject—the Praise of  
 departed Friends and Patrons—'Squire  
 Asgill, at the Grange : his Manners, Ser-  
 vants, Friends—True to his Church : ought  
 therefore to be spared—His Son's different  
 Conduct—Vexation of the Father's Spirit  
 if admitted to see the Alteration—Captain  
 Dowling, a boon Companion, ready to  
 drink at all Times, and with any Company :  
 famous in his Clubroom—His easy Departure—  
 Dolly Murray, a Maiden advanced  
 in Years : abides by Ratafia and Cards—  
 Her free Manners—Her Skill in the Game  
 —Her Preparation and Death—Benbow,  
 how interrupted : his Submission.

SEE ! yonder badgeman, with that glowing face,  
 A meteor shining in this sober place ;  
 Vast sums were paid, and many years were  
 past,

Ere gems so rich around their radiance cast !  
 Such was the fiery front that Bardolph wore,  
 Guiding his master to the tavern-door ;  
 There first that meteor rose, and there alone,  
 In its due place, the rich effulgence shone :  
 But this strange fire the seat of peace invades,  
 And shines portentous in these solemn shades.

Benbow, a boon companion, long approved  
 By jovial sets, and (as he thought) beloved,  
 Was judged as one to joy and friendship prone,  
 And deem'd injurious to himself alone ;

Gen'rous and free, he paid but small regard  
 To trade, and fail'd ; and some declared  
 'twas hard :

These were his friends—his foes conceived  
 the case

Of common kind ; he sought and found  
 disgrace :

The reasoning few, who neither scorn'd nor  
 loved,

His feelings pitied and his faults reproved.

Benbow, the father, left possessions fair,  
 A worthy name and business to his heir ;  
 Benbow, the son, those fair possessions sold,  
 And lost his credit, while he spent the gold :  
 He was a jovial trader : men enjoy'd  
 The night with him ; his day was unemploy'd ;  
 So when his credit and his cash were spent,  
 Here, by mistaken pity, he was sent ;  
 Of late he came, with passions unsubdued,  
 And shared and cursed the hated solitude,  
 Where gloomy thoughts arise, where grievous  
 cares intrude.

Known but in drink—he found an easy  
 friend,

Well pleased his worth and honour to com-  
 mend ;

And thus inform'd, the guardian of the trust  
 Heard the applause and said the claim was  
 just ;

A worthy soul ! unfitted for the strife,  
 Care and contention of a busy life ;—  
 Worthy, and why ?—that o'er the midnight  
 bowl

He made his friend the partner of his soul,  
 And any man his friend :—then thus in glee,  
 ' I speak my mind, I love the truth,' quoth he ;  
 Till 'twas his fate that useful truth to find,  
 'Tis sometimes prudent not to speak the mind.

With wine inflated, man is all upblown,  
 And feels a power which he believes his own ;  
 With fancy soaring to the skies, he thinks  
 His all the virtues all the while he drinks ;  
 But when the gas from the balloon is gone,  
 When sober thoughts and serious cares come  
 on,

Where then the worth that in himself he  
 found ?—

Vanish'd—and he sank grov'ling on the  
 ground.

Still some conceit will Benbow's mind  
inflate,  
Poor as he is,—'tis pleasant to relate  
The joys he once possess'd—it soothes his  
present state.

Seated with some grey beadsman, he regrets  
His former feasting, though it swell'd his  
debts ;

Topers once famed, his friends in earlier days,  
Well he describes, and thinks description  
praise :

Each hero's worth with much delight he  
paints :

Martyrs they were, and he would make them  
saints.

' Alas ! alas ! ' Old England now may say,  
' My glory withers ; it has had its day :  
We're fallen on evil times ; men read and  
think ;

Our bold forefathers loved to fight and drink.

' Then lived the good 'Squire Asgill—what  
a change  
Has death and fashion shown us at the  
Grange !

He bravely thought it best became his rank,  
That all his tenants and his tradesmen drank ;  
He was delighted from his favourite room  
To see them 'cross the park go daily home,  
Praising aloud the liquor and the host,  
And striving who should venerate him most.

' No pride had he, and there was difference  
small

Between the master's and the servants' hall ;  
And here or there the guests were welcome all.  
Of Heaven's free gifts he took no special care,  
He never quarrel'd for a simple hare ;  
But sought, by giving sport, a sportsman's  
name,

Himself a poacher, though at other game :  
He never planted nor inclosed—his trees  
Grew like himself, untroubled and at ease :  
Bounds of all kinds he hated, and had felt  
Choked and imprison'd in a modern belt,  
Which some rare genius now has twined about  
The good old house, to keep old neighbours  
out :

Along his valleys, in the evening-hours,  
The borough-damsels stray'd to gather  
flowers,

Or by the brakes and brushwood of the park,  
To take their pleasant rambles in the dark.

' Some prudes, of rigid kind, forbore to call  
On the kind females—favourites at the hall ;

But better natures saw, with much delight,  
The different orders of mankind unite ;  
'Twas schooling pride to see the footman wait,  
Smile on his sister and receive her plate.

' His worship ever was a churchman true,  
He held in scorn the methodistic crew ;  
May God defend the Church, and save the King,  
He'd pray devoutly and divinely sing.  
Admit that he the holy day would spend  
As priests approved not, still he was a friend :  
Much then I blame the preacher, as too nice,  
To call such trifles by the name of vice ;  
Hinting, though gently and with cautious  
speech,

Of good example—'tis their trade to preach :  
But still 'twas pity, when the worthy 'squire  
Stuck to the church ; what more could they  
require ?

'Twas almost joining that fanatic crew,  
To throw such morals at his honour's pew ;  
A weaker man, had he been so reviled,  
Had left the place—he only swore and smiled.

' But think, ye rectors and ye curates, think,  
Who are your friends, and at their frailties  
wink ;

Conceive not—mounted on your Sunday-  
throne,  
Your fire-brands fall upon your foes alone ;  
They strike your patrons—and, should all  
withdraw,

In whom your wisdoms may discern a flaw,  
You would the flower of all your audience lose,  
And spend your crackers on their empty pews.

' The father dead, the son has found a wife,  
And lives a formal, proud, unsocial life ;—  
The lands are now enclosed ; the tenants all,  
Save at a rent-day, never see the hall :

No lass is suffer'd o'er the walks to come,  
And if there's love, they have it all at home.

' Oh ! could the ghost of our good 'squire  
arise,

And see such change ; would it believe its  
eyes ?

Would it not glide about from place to place,  
And mourn the manners of a feebler race ?  
At that long table, where the servants found  
Mirth and abundance while the year went  
round ;

Where a huge pollard on the winter-fire,  
At a huge distance made them all retire ;  
Where not a measure in the room was kept,  
And but one rule—they tipped till they  
slept,—

There would it see a pale old hag preside,  
A thing made up of stinginess and pride;  
Who carves the meat, as if the flesh could feel,

Careless whose flesh must miss the plenteous meal :

Here would the ghost a small coal-fire behold,  
Not fit to keep one body from the cold ;  
Then would it flit to higher rooms, and stay  
To view a dull, dress'd company at play ;  
All the old comfort, all the genial fare  
For ever gone ! how sternly would it stare :  
And though it might not to their view appear,  
'Twould cause among them lassitude and fear ;  
Then wait to see—where he delight has been—  
The dire effect of fretfulness and spleen.

'Such were the worthies of these better days:  
We had their blessings—they shall have our praise.

'Of Captain Dowling would you hear me speak?

I'd sit and sing his praises for a week :  
He was a man, and man-like all his joy,—  
I'm led to question was he ever boy ?  
Beef was his breakfast;—if from sea and salt,

It relish'd better with his wine of malt ;  
Then, till he dined, if walking in or out,  
Whether the gravel teased him or the gout,  
Though short in wind and flannel'd every limb,

He drank with all who had concerns with him :

Whatever trader, agent, merchant, came,  
They found him ready, every hour the same ;  
Whatever liquors might between them pass,  
He took them all, and never balk'd his glass :  
Nay, with the seamen working in the ship,  
At their request he'd share the grog and flip :

But in the club-room was his chief delight,  
And punch the favourite liquor of the night ;  
Man after man they from the trial shrank,  
And Dowling ever was the last who drank :  
Arrived at home, he, ere he sought his bed,  
With pipe and brandy would compose his head ;

Then half an hour was o'er the news beguiled,  
When he retired as harmless as a child.  
Set but aside the gravel and the gout,  
And breathing short—his sand ran fairly out.

'At fifty-five we lost him—after that  
Life grows insipid and its pleasures flat ;

He had indulged in all that man can have,  
He did not drop a dotard to his grave ;  
Still to the last, his feet upon the chair,  
With rattling lungs now gone beyond repair ;  
When on each feature death had fix'd his stamp,

And not a doctor could the body vamp ;  
Still at the last, to his beloved bowl  
He clung, and cheer'd the sadness of his soul ;  
For though a man may not have much to fear,

Yet death looks ugly, when the view is near :  
—"I go," he said, "but till my friends shall say,

'Twas as a man—I did not sneak away ;  
An honest life with worthy souls I've spent,—  
Come, fill my glass ;"—he took it and he went.

'Poor Dolly Murray !—I might live to see  
My hundredth year, but no such lass as she.  
Easy by nature, in her humour gay,  
She chose her comforts, ratafia and play :  
She loved the social game, the decent glass ;  
And was a jovial, friendly, laughing lass ;  
We sat not then at Whist demure and still,  
But pass'd the pleasant hours at gay Quadrille :

Lame in her side, we placed her in her seat,  
Her hands were free, she cared not for her feet ;

As the game ended, came the glass around,  
(So was the loser cheer'd, the winner crown'd.)  
Mistress of secrets, both the young and old  
In her confided—not a tale she told ;  
Love never made impression on her mind,  
She held him weak, and all his captives blind ;  
She suffer'd no man her free soul to vex,  
Free from the weakness of her gentle sex ;  
One with whom ours unmoved conversing sate,

In cool discussion or in free debate.

'Once in her chair we'd placed the good old lass,

Where first she took her preparation-glass ;  
By lucky thought she'd been that day at prayers,

And long before had fix'd her small affairs ;  
So all was easy—on her cards she cast  
A smiling look ; I saw the thought that pass'd :  
'A king," she call'd—though conscious of her skill,

"Do more," I answer'd—"More," she said,  
"I will ;"

And more she did—cards answer'd to her call,  
She saw the mighty to her mightier fall:

"A vole! a vole!" she cried, "'as fairly  
won,

My game is ended and my work is done;—"—  
This said, she gently, with a single sigh,  
Died as one taught and practised how to die.

'Such were the dead-departed; I survive,  
To breathe in pain among the dead-alive.'

The bell then call'd these ancient men to  
pray,

'Again!' said Benbow,—'tolls it every day?  
Where is the life I led?'—He sigh'd and  
walk'd his way.

## LETTER XVII. THE HOSPITAL AND GOVERNORS

Blessed be the man who provideth for the  
sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him  
in time of trouble.

Psalm xli. 1, Prayer Book, Communion  
Service.

Quas dederis, solas semper habebis opes.

MARTIAL, Lib. v, *Epig.* 42.

Nil negat, et sese vel non poscentibus offert.

CLAUDIAN, *In Eutrop.*, Lib. i. v. 365.

Decipies alios verbis vultuque benigno;

Nam mihi iam notus dissimulatur eris.

MARTIAL, Lib. iv, *Epig.* 88.

Christian Charity anxious to provide for  
future as well as present Miseries—Hence  
the Hospital for the Diseased—Description  
of a recovered Patient—The Building:  
how erected—The Patrons and Governors  
—Eusebius—The more active Manager of  
Business a moral and correct Contributor  
—One of different Description—Good, the  
Result, however intermixed with imper-  
fection.

An ardent spirit dwells with christian love,  
The eagle's vigour in the pitying dove;  
'Tis not enough that we with sorrow sigh,  
That we the wants of pleading man supply;  
That we in sympathy with sufferers feel,  
Nor hear a grief without a wish to heal;  
Not these suffice—to sickness, pain, and wo,  
The christian spirit loves with aid to go;  
Will not be sought, waits not for want to  
plead,

But seeks the duty—nay, prevents the need;  
Her utmost aid to every ill applies,  
And plans relief for coming miseries.

Hence yonder building rose: on either side  
Far stretch'd the wards, all airy, warm, and  
wide;

And every ward has beds by comfort spread,  
And smooth'd for him who suffers on the bed:

There have all kindness, most relief,—for some  
Is cure complete,—it is the sufferer's home:  
Fevers and chronic ills, corroding pains,  
Each accidental mischief man sustains;  
Fractures and wounds, and wither'd limbs  
and lame,

With all that, slow or sudden, vex our frame,  
Have here attendance—here the sufferers lie,  
(Where love and science every aid apply),  
And heal'd with rapture live, or soothed by  
comfort die.

See! one relieved from anguish, and to-day  
Allow'd to walk and look an hour away;  
Two months confined by fever, frenzy, pain,  
He comes abroad and is himself again:  
'Twas in the spring, when carried to the place,  
The snow fell down and melted in his face.

'Tis summer now; all objects gay and new,  
Smiling alike the viewer and the view:  
He stops as one unwilling to advance,  
Without another and another glance;  
With what a pure and simple joy he sees  
Those sheep and cattle browsing at their ease;  
Easy himself, there's nothing breathes or  
moves

But he would cherish—all that lives he loves:  
Observing every ward as round he goes,  
He thinks what pain, what danger they  
enclose;

Warm in his wish for all who suffer there,  
At every view he meditates a prayer:  
No evil counsels in his breast abide,  
There joy, and love, and gratitude reside.

The wish that Roman necks in one were  
found,

That he who form'd the wish might deal the  
wound,

This man had never heard; but of the kind,  
Is that desire which rises in his mind;  
He'd have all English hands (for further he  
Cannot conceive extends our charity),

All but his own, in one right-hand to grow,  
And then what hearty shake would he bestow.

'How rose the building?'—Piety first laid  
A strong foundation, but she wanted aid;  
To Wealth unwieldy was her prayer address'd,  
Who largely gave, and she the donor bless'd:  
Unwieldy Wealth then to his couch withdrew,  
And took the sweetest sleep he ever knew.

Then busy Vanity sustain'd her part,  
'And much,' she said, 'it moved her tender  
heart;

To her all kinds of man's distress were known,  
And all her heart adopted as its own.'

Then Science came—his talents he display'd,  
And Charity with joy the dome survey'd;  
Skill, Wealth, and Vanity, obtain the fame,  
And Piety, the joy that makes no claim.

Patrons there are, and governors, from  
whom

The greater aid and guiding orders come;  
Who voluntary cares and labours take,  
The sufferers' servants for the service' sake;  
Of these a part I give you—but a part,—  
Some hearts are hidden, some have not a  
heart.

First let me praise—for so I best shall paint  
That pious moralist, that reasoning saint!  
Can I of worth like thine, Eusebius, speak?  
The man is willing, but the muse is weak;—  
'Tis thine to wait on woe! to soothe! to heal!  
With learning social, and polite with zeal:  
In thy pure breast although the passions  
dwell,

They're train'd by virtue and no more rebel;  
But have so long been active on her side,  
That passion now might be itself the guide.

Law, conscience, honour, all obey'd; all give  
Th' approving voice, and make it bliss to live;  
While faith, when life can nothing more  
supply,

Shall strengthen hope, and make it bliss to die.

He preaches, speaks and writes with manly  
sense,

No weak neglect, no labour'd eloquence;  
Goodness and wisdom are in all his ways,  
The rude reverse him and the wicked praise.

Upon humility his virtues grow,  
And tower so high because so fix'd below;  
As wider spreads the oak his boughs around,  
When deeper with his roots he digs the solid  
ground.

By him, from ward to ward, is every aid  
The sufferer needs, with every care convey'd:

Like the good tree he brings his treasure forth,  
And, like the tree, unconscious of his worth:  
Meek as the poorest Publican is he,  
And strict as lives the strictest Pharisee;  
Of both, in him unite the better part,  
The blameless conduct and the humble heart.

Yet he escapes not; he, with some, is wise  
In carnal things, and loves to moralize:  
Others can doubt, if all that christian care  
Has not its price—there 's something he may  
share:

But this and ill severer he sustains,  
As gold the fire, and as unhurt remains;  
When most reviled, although he feels the  
smart,

It wakes to nobler deeds the wounded heart,  
As the rich olive, beaten for its fruit,  
Puts forth at every bruise a bearing shoot.

A second friend we have, whose care and  
zeal

But few can equal—few indeed can feel;  
He lived a life obscure, and profits made  
In the coarse habits of a vulgar trade.  
His brother, master of a hoy, he loved  
So well, that he the calling disapproved:

'Alas! poor Tom!' the landman oft would  
sigh,

When the gale freshen'd and the waves ran  
high;

And when they parted, with a tear he'd  
say,

'No more adventure!—here in safety stay.'  
Nor did he feign; with more than half he had,  
He would have kept the seaman, and been  
glad.

Alas! how few resist, when strongly tried—  
A rich relation's nearer kinsman died;  
He sicken'd, and to him the landman went,  
And all his hours with cousin Ephraim spent.  
This Thomas heard, and cared not: 'I,'  
quoth he,

'Have one in port upon the watch for me.'  
So Ephraim died, and when the will was  
shown,

Isaac, the landman, had the whole his own:  
Who to his brother sent a moderate purse,  
Which he return'd in anger, with his curse,  
Then went to sea, and made his grog so  
strong,

He died before he could forgive the wrong.

The rich man built a house, both large and  
high,

He enter'd in and set him down to sigh;

He planted ample woods and gardens fair,  
And walk'd with anguish and compunction  
there :

The rich man's pines, to every friend a treat,  
He saw with pain, and he refused to eat ;  
His daintiest food, his richest wines, were all  
Turn'd by remorse to vinegar and gall :  
The softest down, by living body press'd,  
The rich man bought, and tried to take his  
rest ;

But care had thorns upon his pillow spread,  
And scatter'd sand and nettles in his bed :  
Nervous he grew,—would often sigh and  
groan,

He talk'd but little, and he walk'd alone ;  
Till by his priest convinced, that from one  
deed

Of genuine love would joy and health proceed ;  
He from that time with care and zeal began  
To seek and soothe the grievous ills of man ;  
And as his hands their aid to grief apply,  
He learns to smile and he forgets to sigh.

Now he can drink his wine and taste his  
food,

And feel the blessings, Heav'n has dealt, are  
good ;

And, since the suffering seek the rich man's  
door,

He sleeps as soundly as when young and poor.

Here much he gives—is urgent more to gain ;  
He begs—rich beggars seldom sue in vain :  
Preachers most famed he moves, the crowd  
to move,

And never wearies in the work of love :

He rules all business, settles all affairs,  
He makes collections, he directs repairs ;  
And if he wrong'd one brother,—Heav'n  
forgive

The man by whom so many brethren live !

Then, 'mid our signatures, a name appears  
Of one for wisdom famed above his years ;  
And these were forty : he was from his youth  
A patient searcher after useful truth :  
To language little of his time he gave,  
To science less, nor was the muse's slave ;  
Sober and grave, his college sent him down,  
A fair example for his native town.

Slowly he speaks, and with such solemn air,  
You'd think a Socrates or Solon there ;  
For though a Christian, he's disposed to draw  
His rules from reason's and from nature's  
law.

' Know,' he exclaims, ' my fellow mortals,  
know,

Virtue alone is happiness below ;  
And what is virtue ? prudence first to choose  
Life's real good,—the evil to refuse ;  
Add justice then, the eager hand to hold,  
To curb the lust of power and thirst of gold ;  
Join temperance next, that cheerful health  
insures,  
And fortitude unmoved, that conquers or  
endures.'

He speaks, and lo !—the very man you see,  
Prudent and temperate, just and patient he,  
By prudence taught his worldly wealth to  
keep,

No folly wastes, no avarice swells the heap :  
He no man's debtor, no man's patron lives ;  
Save sound advice, he neither asks nor gives ;  
By no vain thoughts or erring fancy sway'd,  
His words are weighty, or at least are weigh'd ;  
Temp'rate in every place—abroad, at home,  
Thence will applause, and hence will profit  
come ;

And health from either he in time prepares  
For sickness, age, and their attendant cares,  
But not for fancy's ills ;—he never grieves  
For love that wounds or friendship that  
deceives ;

His patient soul endures what Heav'n ordains,  
But neither feels nor fears ideal pains.

' Is aught then wanted in a man so wise ?—  
Alas !—I think he wants infirmities ;  
He wants the ties that knit us to our kind—  
The cheerful, tender, soft, complacent mind,  
That would the feelings, which he dreads,  
excite,

And make the virtues he approves delight ;  
What dying martyrs, saints, and patriots  
feel,

The strength of action and the warmth of  
zeal.

Again attend !—and see a man whose cares  
Are nicely placed on either world's affairs,—  
Merchant and saint ; 'tis doubtful if he knows  
To which account he most regard bestows ;  
Of both he keeps his ledger :—there he reads  
Of gainful ventures and of godly deeds ;  
There all he gets or loses find a place,  
A lucky bargain and a lack of grace.

The joys above this prudent man invite  
To pay his tax—devotion !—day and night ;  
The pains of hell his timid bosom awe,  
And force obedience to the church's law ;

Hence that continual thought,—that solemn  
air,—

Those sad good works, and that laborious  
prayer.

All these (when conscience, waken'd and  
afraid,

To think how avarice calls and is obey'd)  
He in his journal finds, and for his grief  
Obtains the transient opium of relief.

'Sink not, my soul!—my spirit, rise and  
look

O'er the fair entries of this precious book:  
Here are the sins, our debts;—this fairer  
side

Has what to carnal wish our strength denied;  
Has those religious duties every day  
Paid,—which so few upon the sabbath pay;  
Here too are conquests over frail desires,  
Attendance due on all the church requires;  
Then alms I give—for I believe the word  
Of holy writ, and lend unto the Lord,  
And if not all th' importunate demand,  
The fear of want restrains my ready hand;  
—Behold! what sums I to the poor resign,  
Sums placed in Heaven's own book, as well as  
mine:

Rest then, my spirit!—fastings, prayers, and  
alms,

Will soon suppress these idly-raised alarms,  
And weigh'd against our frailties, set in view  
A noble balance in our favour due:

Add that I yearly here affix my name,  
Pledge for large payment—not from love of  
fame,

But to make peace within;—that peace to  
make,

What sums I lavish! and what gains forsake!  
Cheer up, my heart!—let's cast off every  
doubt,

Pray without dread, and place our money out.'

Such the religion of a mind that steers  
Its way to bliss, between its hopes and fears;  
Whose passions in due bounds each other  
keep,

And thus subdued, they murmur till they  
sleep;

Whose virtues all their certain limits know,  
Like well-dried herbs that neither fade nor  
grow;

Who for success and safety ever tries,  
And with both worlds alternately complies.

Such are the guardians of this bless'd estate,  
Whate'er without, they're praised within the  
gate;

That they are men, and have their faults, is  
true,

But here their worth alone appears in view:  
The Muse indeed, who reads the very breast,  
Has something of the secrets there express'd,  
But yet in charity;—and when she sees  
Such means for joy or comfort, health or ease,  
And knows how much united minds effect,  
She almost dreads their failings to detect;  
But truth commands:—in man's erroneous  
kind,

Virtues and frailties mingle in the mind;  
Happy!—when fears to public spirit move,  
And even vices to the work of love.

## LETTER XVIII. THE POOR AND THEIR DWELLINGS

Bene paupertas

Humili tecto contenta latet.

SENeca, *Oet.*, Act v. 884-5.

Omnes quibus res sunt minus secundae, magis  
sunt, nescio quo modo,  
Suspiciosi ; ad contumeliam omnia accipiunt  
magis ;

Propter suam impotentiam se semper credunt  
ludier.

TERENT., in *Adelph.*, Act iv, Sc. 3.

Show not to the poor thy pride,

Let their home a cottage be :

Nor the feeble body hide

In a palace fit for thee ;

Let him not about him see

Lofly ceilings, ample halls,

Or a gate his boundary be,

Where nor friend or kinsman calls.

Let him not one walk behold,

That only one which he must tread,

Nor a chamber large and cold,

Where the aged and sick are led ;

Better far his humble shed,

Humble sheds of neighbours by,

And the old and tatter'd bed,

Where he sleeps and hopes to die.

To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,  
And from the pow'ful arms of sloth get free,  
'Tis rising from the dead—Alas ! it cannot be.

THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence*, Canto II, v. 61.

The Method of treating the Borough Paupers

—Many maintained at their own Dwellings

—Some Characters of the Poor—The

School-mistress, when aged—The Idiot—

The poor Sailor—The declined Tradesman

and his Companion—This contrasted with

the Maintenance of the Poor in a common

Mansion erected by the Hundred—The

Objections to this Method : not Want, nor

Cruelty, but the necessary Evils of this

Mode—What they are—Instances of the

Evil—A Return to the Borough Poor—

The Dwellings of these—The Lanes and

By-ways—No Attention here paid to

Convenience—The Pools in the Path-ways

—Amusements of Sea-port Children—The

Town-Flora—Herbs on Walls and vacant

Spaces—A female Inhabitant of an Alley

—A large Building let to several poor In-

habitants—Their Manners and Habits.

YES ! we've our Borough-vices, and I know  
How far they spread, how rapidly they grow ;

Yet think not virtue quits the busy place,  
Nor charity, the virtues' crown and grace.

' Our poor, how feed we ? '—To the most  
we give

A weekly dole, and at their homes they live ;—  
Others together dwell,—but when they come  
To the low roof, they see a kind of home,  
A social people whom they've ever known,  
With their own thoughts and manners like  
their own.

At her old house, her dress, her air the same,  
I see mine ancient letter-loving dame :

' Learning, my child,' said she, ' shall fame  
command ;

Learning is better worth than house or land—  
For houses perish, lands are gone and spent ;  
In learning then excel, for that's most  
excellent.'

' And what her learning ? '—'Tis with awe  
to look

In every verse throughout one sacred book ;  
From this her joy, her hope, her peace is  
sought :

This she has learn'd, and she is nobly taught.

If aught of mine have gain'd the public ear ;  
If RUTLAND deigns these humble Tales to

hear ;

If critics pardon, what my friends approved ;

Can I mine ancient widow pass unmoved ?

Shall I not think what pains the matron took,

When first I trembled o'er the gilded book ?

How she, all patient, both at eve and morn,

Her needle pointed at the guarding horn ;

And how she soothed me, when, with study

sad,

I labour'd on to reach the final zad ?

Shall I not grateful still the dame survey,

And ask the muse the poet's debt to pay ?

Nor I alone, who hold a trifer's pen,

But half our bench of wealthy, weighty men,

Who rule our Borough, who enforce our laws ;

They own the matron as the leading cause,

And feel the pleasing debt, and pay the just

applause :

To her own house is borne the week's supply ;

There she in credit lives, there hopes in peace

to die.

With her a harmless idiot we behold,

Who hoards up silver shells for shining gold ;



These he preserves, with unremitted care,  
To buy a seat, and reign the Borough's mayor:  
Alas!—who could th' ambitious changeling  
tell,

That what he sought our rulers dared to sell?

Near these a sailor, in that hut of thatch  
(A fish-boat's cabin is its nearest match),  
Dwells, and the dungeon is to him a seat,  
Large as he wishes—in his view complete:  
A lockless coffer and a lidless hutch  
That hold his stores, have room for twice as  
much:

His one spare shirt, long glass, and iron box,  
Lie all in view; no need has he for locks:  
Here he abides, and, as our strangers pass,  
Heshows the shipping, he presents the glass;  
He makes (unask'd) their ports and business  
known,

And (kindly heard) turns quickly to his own.  
Of noble captains, heroes every one,—  
You might as soon have made the steeple run:  
And then his messmates, if you're pleased to  
stay,

He'll one by one the gallant souls display,  
And as the story verges to an end,  
He'll wind from deed to deed, from friend to  
friend;

He'll speak of those long lost, the brave of old,  
As princes gen'rous and as heroes bold;  
Then will his feelings rise, till you may trace  
Gloom, like a cloud, frown o'er his manly  
face,—

And then a tear or two, which sting his pride;  
These he will dash indignantly aside,  
And splice his tale;—now take him from  
his cot,

And for some cleaner birth exchange his lot,  
How will he all that cruel aid deplore?  
His heart will break, and he will fight no  
more.

Here is the poor old merchant: he declined,  
And, as they say, is not in perfect mind;  
In his poor house, with one poor maiden  
friend,

Quiet he paces to his journey's end.

Rich in his youth, he traded and he fail'd;  
Again he tried, again his fate prevail'd;  
His spirits low and his exertions small,  
He fell perforce, he seem'd decreed to fall:  
Like the gay knight, unapt to rise was he,  
But downward sank with sad alacrity.  
A borough-place we gain'd him—in disgrace  
For gross neglect, he quickly lost the place;

But still he kept a kind of sullen pride,  
Striving his wants to hinder or to hide:  
At length, compell'd by very need, in grief  
He wrote a proud petition for relief.

'He did suppose a fall, like his, would prove  
Of force to wake their sympathy and love;  
Would make them feel the changes all may  
know,

And stir them up a new regard to show.'  
His suit was granted;—to an ancient maid,  
Relieved herself, relief for him was paid:  
Here they together (meet companions) dwell,  
And dismal tales of man's misfortunes tell:  
'Twas not a world for them, God help them!

they  
Could not deceive, nor flatter, nor betray;  
But there's a happy change, a scene to come,  
And they, (God help them! shall he soon at  
home.'

If these no pleasures nor enjoyments gain,  
Still none their spirits nor their speech re-  
strain;

They sigh at ease, 'mid comforts they com-  
plain.

The poor will grieve, the poor will weep and  
sigh,

Both when they know, and when they know  
not why;

But we our bounty with such care bestow,  
That cause for grieving they shall seldom  
know.

Your plan I love not;—with a number you  
Have placed your poor, your pitiable few;  
There, in one house, throughout their lives to  
be,

The pauper-palace which they hate to see:  
That giant-building, that high-bounding wall,  
Those bare-worn walks, that lofty thund'ring  
hall!

That large loud clock, which tolls each  
dreaded hour.

Those gates and locks, and all those signs of  
power:

It is a prison, with a milder name,  
Which few inhabit without dread or shame.

Be it agreed—the poor who hither come  
Partake of plenty, seldom found at home;  
That airy rooms and decent beds are meant  
To give the poor by day, by night, content;  
That none are frighten'd, once admitted here,  
By the stern looks of lordly overseer:  
Grant that the guardians of the place attend,  
And ready ear to each petition lend;

That they desire the grieving poor to show  
What ills they feel, what partial acts they  
know,

Not without promise, nay desire to heal  
Each wrong they suffer and each wo they feel.

Alas! their sorrows in their bosoms dwell;  
They've much to suffer, but have nought to  
tell;

They have no evil in the place to state,  
And dare not say, it is the house they hate:  
They own there's granted all such place can  
give,

But live repining, for 'tis there they live.

Grandsires are there, who now no more  
must see,

No more must nurse upon the trembling knee  
The lost loved daughter's infant progeny:  
Like death's dread mansion, this allows not  
place

For joyful meetings of a kindred race.

Is not the matron there, to whom the son  
Was wont at each declining day to run;  
He (when his toil was over) gave delight,  
By lifting up the latch, and one 'good night?'  
Yes, she is here; but nightly to her door  
The son, still lab'ring, can return no more.  
Widows are here, who in their huts were left,  
Of husbands, children, plenty, ease bereft;  
Yet all that grief within the humble shed  
Was soften'd, soften'd in the humble bed:  
But here, in all its force, remains the grief,  
And not one soft'ning object for relief.

Who can, when here, the social neighbour  
meet?

Who learn the story current in the street?  
Who to the long-known intimate impart  
Facts they have learn'd or feelings of the  
heart?—

They talk indeed, but who can choose a friend,  
Or seek companions at their journey's end?

Here are not those whom they, when  
infants, knew;

Who, with like fortune, up to manhood grew  
Who, with like troubles, at old age arrived;  
Who, like themselves, the joy of life survived;  
Whom time and custom so familiar made,  
That looks the meaning in the mind convey'd:  
But here to strangers, words nor looks impart  
The various movements of the suffering heart;  
Nor will that heart with those alliance own,  
To whom its views and hopes are all unknown.

What, if no grievous fears their lives annoy,  
Is it not worse no prospects to enjoy?

'Tis cheerless living in such bounded view,  
With nothing dreadful, but with nothing new;  
Nothing to bring them joy, to make them  
weep,—

The day itself is, like the night, asleep:

Or on the sameness if a break be made,

'Tis by some pauper to his grave convey'd;  
By smuggled news from neighb'ring village  
told,

News never true, or truth a twelvemonth old;  
By some new inmate doom'd with them to  
dwell,

Or justice come to see that all goes well;

Or change of room, or hour of leave to crawl  
On the black footway winding with the wall,  
Till the stern bell forbids, or master's sterner  
call.

Here too the mother sees her children  
train'd,

Her voice excluded and her feelings pain'd:  
Who govern here, by general rules must move,  
Where ruthless custom rends the bond of love.  
Nations we know have nature's law trans-  
gress'd,

And snatch'd the infant from the parent's  
breast;

But still for public good the boy was train'd,  
The mother suffer'd, but the matron gain'd:  
Here nature's outrage serves no cause to aid;  
The ill is felt, but not the Spartan made.

Then too I own, it grieves me to behold  
Those ever virtuous, helpless now and old,  
By all for care and industry approved,  
For truth respected, and for temper loved;  
And who, by sickness and misfortune tried,  
Gave want its worth and poverty its pride:  
I own it grieves me to behold them sent  
From their old home; 'tis pain, 'tis punish-  
ment,

To leave each scene familiar, every face,  
For a new people and a stranger race;  
For those who, sunk in sloth and dead to shame  
From scenes of guilt with daring spirits came;  
Men, just and guileless, at such manners start,  
And bless their God that time has fenced  
their heart,

Confirm'd their virtue, and expell'd the fear  
Of vice in minds so simple and sincere.

Here the good pauper, losing all the praise  
By worthy deeds acquired in better days,  
Breathes a few months, then, to his chamber  
led,

Expires, while strangers prattle round his bed.

The grateful hunter, when his horse is old,  
Will not the useless favourite to be sold ;  
He knows his former worth, and gives him  
place

In some fair pasture, till he runs his race :  
But has the labourer, has the seaman done  
Less worthy service, though not dealt to one ?  
Shall we not then contribute to their ease,  
In their old haunts, where ancient objects  
please ?

That, till their sight shall fail them, they  
may trace  
The well-known prospect and the long-loved  
face.

The noble oak, in distant ages seen,  
With far-stretch'd boughs and foliage fresh  
and green,

Though now its bare and forky branches show  
How much it lacks the vital warmth below,  
The stately ruin yet our wonder gains,  
Nay, moves our pity, without thought of  
pains :

Much more shall real wants and cares of age  
Our gentler passions in their cause engage ;—  
Drooping and burthen'd with a weight of years,  
What venerable ruin man appears !

How worthy pity, love, respect, and grief—  
He claims protection—he compels relief ;—  
And shall we send him from our view, to brave  
The storms abroad, whom we at home might  
save,

And let a stranger dig our ancient brother's  
grave ?

No !—we will shield him from the storm he  
fears,

And when he falls, embalm him with our tears.

Farewell to these ; but all our poor to know,  
Let's seek the winding lane, the narrow row,  
Suburban prospects, where the traveller stops  
To see the sloping tenement on props,  
With building yards immix'd, and humble  
sheds and shops ;

Where the Cross-Keys and Plumber's-Arms  
invite

Laborious men to taste their coarse delight ;  
Where the low porches, stretching from the  
door,

Gave some distinction in the days of yore,  
Yet now neglected, more offend the eye,  
By gloom and ruin, than the cottage by :  
Places like these the noblest town endures,  
The gayest palace has its sinks and sewers.

Here is no pavement, no inviting shop,  
To give us shelter when compell'd to stop ;  
But plashy puddles stand along the way,  
Fill'd by the rain of one tempestuous day ;  
And these so closely to the buildings run,  
That you must ford them, for you cannot  
shun ;

Though here and there convenient bricks are  
laid,

And door-side heaps afford their dubious aid.

Lo ! yonder shed ; observe its garden-  
ground,

With the low paling, form'd of wreck, around :  
There dwells a fisher ; if you view his boat,  
With bed and barrel—'tis his house afloat ;  
Look at his house, where ropes, nets, blocks  
abound,

Tar, pitch, and oakum—'tis his boat aground :  
That space enclosed, but little he regards,  
Spread o'er with relics of masts, sails, and  
yards :

Fish by the wall, on spit of elder, rest,  
Of all his food, the cheapest and the best,  
By his own labour caught, for his own hunger  
dress'd.

Here our reformers come not ; none object  
To paths polluted, or upbraid neglect ;  
None care that ashy heaps at doors are cast,  
That coal-dust flies along the blinding blast :  
None heed the stagnant pools on either side,  
Where new-launch'd ships of infant sailors  
ride :

Rodneys in rags here British valour boast,  
And lisping Nelsons fright the Gallic coast.  
They fix the rudder, set the swelling sail,  
They point the bowsprit, and they blow the  
gale :

True to her port, the frigate scuds away,  
And o'er that frowning ocean finds her bay :  
Her owner rigg'd her, and he knows her worth,  
And sees her, fearless, gunwale-deep go forth ;  
Dreadless he views his sea, by breezes curl'd,  
When inch-high billows vex the watery world.

There, fed by food they love, to rankest  
size,

Around the dwellings docks and wormwood  
rise ;

Here the strong mallow strikes her slimy  
root,

Here the dull night-shade hangs her deadly  
fruit ;

On hills of dust the henbane's faded green,  
And pencil'd flower of sickly scent is seen ;

At the wall's base the fiery nettle springs,  
With fruit globose and fierce with poison'd  
stings ;

Above (the growth of many a year) is spread  
The yellow level of the stone-crop's bed ;  
In every chink delights the fern to grow,  
With glossy leaf and tawny bloom below :<sup>1</sup>  
These, with our sea-weeds, rolling up and  
down,

Form the contracted Flora<sup>2</sup> of the town.

Say, wilt thou more of scenes so sordid  
know ?

Then will I lead thee down the dusty row ;  
By the warm alley and the long close lane,—  
There mark the fractured door and paper'd  
pane,

Where flags the noon-tide air, and, as we  
pass,

We fear to breathe the putrefying mass :  
But fearless yonder matron ; she disdains  
To sigh for zephyrs from ambrosial plains ;  
But mends her meshes torn, and pours her lay  
All in the stifling fervour of the day.

Her naked children round the alley run,  
And roll'd in dust, are bronzed beneath the  
sun ;

Or gambol round the dame, who, loosely  
dress'd,

Woos the coy breeze, to fan the open breast :  
She, once a handmaid, strove by decent art  
To charm her sailor's eye and touch his heart ;  
Her bosom then was veil'd in kerchief clean,  
And fancy left to form the charms unseen.

But when a wife, she lost her former care,  
Nor thought on charms, nor time for dress  
could spare ;

Careless she found her friends who dwell  
beside,

No rival beauty kept alive her pride :  
Still in her bosom virtue keeps her place,  
But decency is gone, the virtues' guard and  
grace.

See that long boarded building!—By these  
stairs

Each humble tenant to that home repairs—  
By one large window lighted—it was made  
For some bold project, some design in trade :  
This fail'd,—and one, a humorist in his way,  
(Ill was the humour), bought it in decay ;  
Nor will he sell, repair, or take it down ;

<sup>1</sup>'Tis his,—what cares he for the talk of town ?

<sup>2</sup>'No! he will let it to the poor ;—a home  
Where he delights to see the creatures come :

'They may be thieves ;'—'Well, so are  
richer men ;'

'Or idlers, cheats, or prostitutes : '—'What  
then ?'

'Outcasts pursued by justice, vile and  
base ;'—

'They need the more hospity and the place :'  
Convert to system his vain mind has built,  
He gives asylum to deceit and guilt.

In this vast room, each place by habit fix'd,  
Are sexes, families, and ages mix'd,—

To union forced by crime, by fear, by need,  
And all in morals and in modes agreed ;  
Some ruin'd men, who from mankind remove ;  
Some ruin'd females, who yet talk of love ;  
And some grown old in idleness—the prey  
To vicious spleen, still railing through the day ;  
And need and misery, vice and danger bind  
In sad alliance each degraded mind.

That window view!—oil'd paper and old  
glass

Stain the strong rays, which, though im-  
peded, pass,

And give a dusty warmth to that huge room,  
The conquer'd sunshine's melancholy gloom ;  
When all those western rays, without so bright,  
Within become a ghastly glimmering light,  
As pale and faint upon the floor they fall,  
Or feebly gleam on the opposing wall :  
That floor, once oak, now pieced with fir  
unplaned,

Or, where not pieced, in places bored and  
stain'd ;

That wall once whiten'd, now an odious sight,  
Stain'd with all hues, except its ancient white ;

The only door is fasten'd by a pin,  
Or stubborn bar, that none may hurry in :

For this poor room, like rooms of greater pride,  
At times contains what prudent men would  
hide.

Where'er the floor allows an even space,  
Chalking and marks of various games have  
place ;

Boys without foresight, pleased in halts  
'swing ;

On a fix'd hook men cast a flying ring ;  
While gin and snuff their female neighbours  
share,

And the black beverage in the fractured ware.

On swinging shelf are things incongruous  
stored,—

Scraps of their food,—the cards and cribbage-  
board,—

With pipes and pouches; while on peg below,  
Hang a lost member's fiddle and its bow:  
That still reminds them how he'd dance and  
play,

Ere sent untimely to the convicts' bay.

Here by a curtain, by a blanket there,  
Are various beds conceal'd, but none with  
care;

Where some by day and some by night, as best  
Suit their employments, seek uncertain rest;  
The drowsy children at their pleasure creep  
To the known crib, and there securely sleep.

Each end contains a grate, and these beside  
Are hung utensils for their boil'd and fried—  
All used at any hour, by night, by day,  
As suit the purse, the person, or the prey.

Above the fire, the mantel-shelf contains  
Of china-ware some poor unmatch'd remains;  
There many a tea-cup's gaudy fragment stands,  
All placed by vanity's unwearied hands;

For here she lives, e'en here she looks about,  
To find some small consoling objects out:  
Nor heed these Spartan dames their house,  
nor sit

'Mid cares domestic,—they nor sew nor  
knit;

But of their fate discourse, their ways, their  
wars,

With arm'd authorities, their 'scapes and  
scars:

These lead to present evils, and a cup,  
If fortune grant it, winds description up.

High hung at either end, and next the  
wall,

Two ancient mirrors show the forms of all,  
In all their force;—these aid them in their  
dress,

But with the good, the evils too express,  
Doubling each look of care, each token of  
distress.

## LETTER XIX. THE POOR OF THE BOROUGH

### THE PARISH-CLERK

Nam dives qui fieri vult,  
Et citò vult fieri; sed quae reverentia legum,  
Quis metus, aut pudor est unquam pro-  
perantis avari?

JUVENAL, *Sat.* xiv, vv. 176-8.

Nocte brevem si fortè indulsit cura soporem,  
Et toto versata toro iam membra quiescunt,  
Continuò templum et violati Numinis aras,  
Et quod praecipuis mentem sudoribus urget,  
Te videt in somnis; tua sacra et major imago  
Humana turbat pavidum, cogitque fateri.

JUVENAL, *Sat.* xiii, vv. 217-22.

The Parish-Clerk began his Duties with the  
late Vicar, a grave and austere Man; one  
fully orthodox; a Detector and Opposer  
of the Wiles of Satan—His Opinion of his  
own Fortitude—The more frail offended  
by these Professions—His good Advice  
gives further Provocation—They invent  
Stratagems to overcome his Virtue—His  
Triumph—He is yet not invulnerable: is  
assaulted by Fear of Want, and Avarice—  
He gradually yields to the Seduction—He  
reasons with himself and is persuaded—He  
offends, but with Terror; repeats his  
Offence; grows familiar with Crime; is  
detected—His Sufferings and Death.

With our late vicar, and his age the same,  
His clerk, hight Jachin, to his office came;  
The like slow speech was his, the like tall  
slender frame:

But Jachin was the gravest man on ground,  
And heard his master's jokes with look pro-  
found;

For worldly wealth this man of letters sigh'd,  
And had a sprinkling of the spirit's pride:  
But he was sober, chaste, devout, and just,  
One whom his neighbours could believe and  
trust:

Of none suspected, neither man nor maid  
By him were wrong'd, or were of him afraid.

There was indeed a frown, a trick of state  
In Jachin;—formal was his air and gait;  
But if he seem'd more solemn and less kind  
Than some light men to light affairs confined,  
Still 'twas allow'd that he should so behave  
As in high seat, and be severely grave.

This book-taught man, to man's first foe  
profess'd

Defiance stern, and hate that knew not  
rest;

He held that Satan, since the world began,  
In every act, had strife with every man;

That never evil deed on earth was done,  
But of the acting parties he was one ;  
The flattering guide to make ill prospects  
clear ;

To smooth rough ways the constant pioneer ;  
The ever-tempting, soothing, softening power,  
Ready to cheat, seduce, deceive, devour.

' Me has the sly seducer oft withstood,'  
Said pious Jachin,—' but he gets no good ;  
I pass the house where swings the tempting  
sign,

And pointing, tell him, "Satan, that is thine :"  
I pass the damsels pacing down the street,  
And look more grave and solemn when we  
meet ;

Nor doth it irk me to rebuke their smiles,  
Their wanton ambling and their watchful  
wiles :

Nay, like the good John Bunyan, when I view  
Those forms, I'm angry at the ills they do ;  
That I could pinch and spoil, in sin's despite,  
Beauties ! which frail and evil thoughts  
excite.\*

' At feasts and banquets seldom am I found,  
And (save at church) abhor a tuneful sound ;  
To plays and shows I run not to and fro,  
And where my master goes forbear to go.'

No wonder Satan took the thing amiss,  
To be opposed by such a man as this—  
A man so grave, important, cautious, wise,  
Who dared not trust his feeling or his eyes ;

No wonder he should lurk and lie in wait,  
Should fit his hooks and ponder on his bait,  
Should on his movements keep a watchful  
eye ;

For he pursued a fish who led the fry.

With his own peace our clerk was not  
content,  
He tried, good man ! to make his friends  
repent.

' Nay, nay, my friends, from inns and  
taverns fly ;

You may suppress your thirst, but not supply :  
A foolish proverb says, "the devil's at  
home ;"

But he is there, and tempts in every room :  
Men feel, they know not why, such places  
please ;

His are the spells—they're idleness and ease ;

\* John Bunyan, in one of the many productions  
of his zeal, has ventured to make public this ex-  
traordinary sentiment, which the frigid piety of  
our clerk so readily adopted.

Magic of fatal kind he throws around,  
Where care is banish'd but the heart is bound.

' Think not of beauty ; when a maid you  
meet,

Turn from her view and step across the street ;  
Dread all the sex : their looks create a charm,  
A smile should fright you and a word alarm :  
E'en I myself, with all my watchful care,  
Have for an instant felt th' insidious snare,  
And caught my sinful eyes at th' endangering  
stare ;

Till I was forced to smite my bounding breast  
With forceful blow and bid the bold-one rest.

' Go not with crowds when they to pleasure  
run,

But public joy in private safety shun :  
When bells, diverted from their true intent,  
Ring loud for some deluded mortal sent  
To hear or make long speech in parliament ;  
What time the many, that unruly beast,  
Roars its rough joy and shares the final feast :  
Then heed my counsel, shut thine ears and  
eyes ;

A few will hear me—for the few are wise.'

Not Satan's friends, nor Satan's self could  
bear

The cautious man who took of souls such care ;  
An interloper,—one who, out of place,  
Had volunteered upon the side of grace :  
There was his master ready once a week  
To give advice ; what further need he seek ?  
' Amen, so be it : '—what had he to do  
With more than this ?—'twas insolent and  
new ;

And some determined on a way to see

How frail he was, that so it might not be.

First they essay'd to tempt our saint to sin,  
By points of doctrine argued at an inn ;  
Where he might warmly reason, deeply drink,  
Then lose all power to argue and to think.

In vain they tried ; he took the question up,  
Clear'd every doubt, and barely touch'd the  
cup :

By many a text he proved his doctrine sound,  
And look'd in triumph on the tempters round.

Next 'twas their care an artful lass to find,  
Who might consult him, as perplex'd in mind ;  
She they conceived might put her case with  
fears,

With tender tremblings and seducing tears ;  
She might such charms of various kind dis-  
play,

That he would feel their force and melt away :

For why of nymphs such caution and such dread,

Unless he felt and fear'd to be misled ?

She came, she spake : he calmly heard her case,

And plainly told her 'twas a want of grace ;  
Bade her ' such fancies and affections check,  
And wear a thicker muslin on her neck,'  
Abased, his human foes the combat fled,  
And the stern clerk yet higher held his head.  
They were indeed a weak, impatient set,  
But their shrewd prompter had his engines yet ;

Had various means to make a mortal trip,  
Who shunn'd a flowing bowl and rosy lip ;  
And knew a thousand ways his heart to move,  
Who flies from banquets and who laughs at love.

Thus far the playful Muse has lent her aid,  
But now departs, of graver theme afraid ;  
Her may we seek in more appropriate time,—  
There is no jesting with distress and crime.

Our worthy clerk had now arrived at fame,  
Such as but few in his degree might claim ;  
But he was poor, and wanted not the sense  
That lowly rates the praise without the pence :  
He saw the common herd with reverence treat  
The weakest Burgess whom they chanced to meet ;

While few respected his exalted views,  
And all beheld his doublet and his shoes :  
None, when they meet, would to his parts allow  
(Save his poor boys) a hearing or a bow :  
To this false judgment of the vulgar mind,  
He was not fully, as a saint, resign'd ;  
He found it much his jealous soul affect,  
To fear derision and to find neglect.

The year was bad, the christening-fees were small,

The weddings few, the parties paupers all :  
Desire of gain with fear of want combined,  
Raised sad commotion in his wounded mind ;  
Wealth was in all his thoughts, his views, his dreams,  
And prompted base desires and baseless schemes.

Alas ! how often erring mortals keep  
The strongest watch against the foes who sleep ;

While the more wakeful, bold and artful foe  
Is suffer'd guardless and unmark'd to go.

Once in a month the sacramental bread  
Our clerk with wine upon the table spread ;

The custom this, that, as the vicar reads,  
He for our offerings round the church proceeds :

Tall spacious seats the wealthier people hid,  
And none had view of what his neighbour did ;  
Laid on the box and mingled when they fell,  
Who should the worth of each oblation tell ?  
Now as poor Jachin took the usual round,  
And saw the alms and heard the metal sound,  
He had a thought ;—at first it was no more  
Than—' these have cash and give it to the poor : '

A second thought from this to work began—  
' And can they give it to a poorer man ? '  
Proceeding thus,—' My merit could they know,

And knew my need, how freely they'd bestow ;  
But though they know not, these remain the same ;

And are a strong, although a secret claim :  
To me, alas ! the want and worth are known,  
Why then, in fact, 'tis but to take my own.'

Thought after thought pour'd in, a tempting train,—

' Suppose it done,—who is it could complain ?  
How could the poor ? for they such trifles share,

As add no comfort, as suppress no care ;  
But many a pittance makes a worthy heap,—  
What says the law ? that silence puts to sleep :—

Nought then forbids, the danger could we shun,

And sure the business may be safely done.

' But am I earnest ?—earnest ? No.—I say,  
If such my mind, that I could plan a way ;  
Let me reflect ;—I've not allow'd me time  
To purse the pieces, and if dropp'd they'd chime : '

Fertile is evil in the soul of man,—

He paused,—said Jachin, ' They may drop on bran.

Why then 'tis safe and (all consider'd) just,  
The poor receive it,—'tis no breach of trust  
The old and widows may their trifles miss,  
There must be evil in a good like this :  
But I'll be kind—the sick I'll visit twice,  
When now but once, and freely give advice.  
Yet let me think again : '—Again he tried,  
For stronger reasons on his passion's side,  
And quickly these were found, yet slowly he complied.

The morning came: the common service done,—

Shut every door,—the solemn rite begun,—  
And, as the priest the sacred sayings read,  
The clerk went forward, trembling as he tread;  
O'er the tall pew he held the box, and heard  
The offer'd piece, rejoicing as he fear'd:  
Just by the pillar, as he cautious tripp'd,  
And turn'd the aile, he then a portion slipp'd  
From the full store, and to the pocket sent,  
But held a moment—and then down it went.

The priest read on, on walk'd the man afraid,

Till a gold offering in the plate was laid;  
Trembling he took it, for a moment stopp'd,  
Then down it fell, and sounded as it dropp'd;  
Amazed he started, for th' affrighted man,  
Lost and bewild'rd, thought not of the bran;  
But all were silent, all on things intent  
Of high concern, none ear to money lent;  
So on he walk'd, more cautious than before,  
And gain'd the purposed sum and one piece more.

*Practice makes perfect*;—when the month came round,

He dropp'd the cash, nor listen'd for a sound;  
But yet, when last of all th' assembled flock,  
He ate and drank,—it gave th' electric shock:  
Oft was he forced his reasons to repeat,  
Ere he could kneel in quiet at his seat;  
But custom soothed him—ere a single year  
All this was done without restraint or fear:  
Cool and collected, easy and composed,  
He was correct till all the service closed;  
Then to his home, without a groan or sigh,  
Gravely he went, and laid his treasure by.

Want will complain: some widows had express'd

A doubt if they were favour'd like the rest;  
The rest described with like regret their dole,  
And thus from parts they reason'd to the whole;

When all agreed some evil must be done,  
Or rich men's hearts grew harder than a stone.

Our easy vicar cut the matter short;  
He would not listen to such vile report.

All were not thus—there govern'd in that year

A stern stout churl, an angry overseer;  
A tyrant fond of power, loud, lewd, and most severe:

Him the mild vicar, him the graver clerk,  
Advised, reprov'd, but nothing would he mark,

Save the disgrace, 'and that, my friends,' said he,

'Will I avenge, whenever time may be.'

And now, alas! 'twas time;—from man to man

Doubt and alarm and shrewd suspicions ran.

With angry spirit and with sly intent,  
This parish-ruler to the altar went;

A private mark he fix'd on shillings three,  
And but one mark could in the money see;

Besides, in peering round, he chanced to note  
A sprinkling slight on Jachin's Sunday-coat:

All doubt was over:—when the flock were bless'd,

In wrath he rose, and thus his mind express'd.

'Foul deeds are here!' and saying this, he took

The clerk, whose conscience, in her cold-fit, shook:

His pocket then was emptied on the place;  
All saw his guilt; all witness'd his disgrace:

He fell, he fainted, not a groan, a look,  
Escaped the culprit; 'twas a final stroke—

A death-wound never to be heal'd—a fall  
That all had witness'd, and amazed were all.

As he recover'd, to his mind it came,  
'I owe to Satan this disgrace and shame:'

All the seduction now appear'd in view;  
'Let me withdraw,' he said, and he withdrew;

No one withheld him, all in union cried,  
E'en the avenger,—'We are satisfied:'

For what has death in any form to give,  
Equal to that man's terrors, if he live?

He lived in freedom, but he hourly saw  
How much more fatal justice is than law;

He saw another in his office reign,  
And his mild master treat him with disdain;

He saw that all men shunn'd him, some reviled,

The harsh pass'd frowning, and the simple smiled;

The town maintain'd him, but with some reproof,

And clerks and scholars proudly kept aloof.'

In each lone place, dejected and dismay'd,  
Shrinking from view, his wasting form he laid;

Or to the restless sea and roaring wind  
Gave the strong yearnings of a ruin'd mind:

On the broad beach, the silent summer-day,  
Stretch'd on some wreck, he wore his life away;

Or where the river mingles with the sea,  
Or on the mud-bank by the elder-tree,

Or by the bounding marsh-dyke, there was he:



And when unable to forsake the town,  
In the blind courts he sate desponding down—  
Always alone ; then feebly would he crawl  
The church-way walk, and lean upon the  
wall :

Too ill for this, he lay beside the door,  
Compell'd to hear the reasoning of the poor :  
He look'd so pale, so weak, the pitying crowd  
Their firm belief of his repentance vow'd ;  
They saw him then so ghastly and so thin,  
That they exclaim'd, ' Is this the work of  
sin ? '—

' Yes,' in his better moments, he replied,  
' Of sinful avarice and the spirit's pride ;—  
While yet untempted, I was safe and well ;  
Temptation came ; I reason'd, and I fell :  
To be man's guide and glory I design'd,  
A rare example for our sinful kind ;  
But now my weakness and my guilt I see,  
And am a warning—man, be warn'd by me !'  
He said, and saw no more the human face ;  
To a lone loft he went, his dying place,  
And, as the vicar of his state inquired,  
Turn'd to the wall and silently expired !

## LETTER XX. THE POOR OF THE BOROUGH

ELLEN ORFORD

Patience and sorrow strove  
Who should express her goodliest.

SHAKSPEARE, *Lear*, Act iv, Sc. 3.

No charms she now can boast, 'tis true,  
But other charmers wither too :

' And she is old,'—the fact I know,  
And old will other heroines grow ;  
But not like them has she been laid,  
In ruin'd castle, sore dismay'd ;  
Where naughty man and ghostly spright,  
Fill'd her pure mind with awe and dread,  
Stalk'd round the room, put out the light,  
And shook the curtains round her bed.

No cruel uncle kept her land,  
No tyrant father forced her hand ;

She had no vixen virgin-aunt,  
Without whose aid she could not eat,  
And yet who poison'd all her meat,

With gibe and sneer and taunt.  
Yet of the heroine she'd a share,

She saved a lover from despair,  
And granted all his wish, in spite  
Of what she knew and felt was right :

But heroine then no more,  
She own'd the fault, and wept and pray'd,  
And humbly took the parish aid,  
And dwelt among the poor.

The Widow's Cottage—Blind Ellen one—Hers  
- not the Sorrows or Adventures of Heroines  
—What these are, first described—Deserted  
Wives ; rash Lovers ; courageous Damsels :  
in desolated Mansions ; in grievous Per-  
plexity—These Evils, however severe, of  
short Duration—Ellen's Story—Her Em-  
ployment in Childhood—First Love ; first  
Adventure ; its miserable Termination—  
An idiot Daughter—A Husband—Care in

Business without Success—The Man's  
Despondency and its Effect—Their Chil-  
dren : how disposed of—One particularly  
unfortunate—Fate of the Daughter—Ellen  
keeps a School and is happy—Becomes  
blind : loses her School—Her Consolations.

OBSERVE yon tenement, apart and small,  
Where the wet pebbles shine upon the wall ;  
Where the low benches lean beside the door,  
And the red paling bounds the space before ;  
Where thrift and lavender, and lad's-love<sup>1</sup>  
bloom,—

That humble dwelling is the widow's home ;  
There live a pair, for various fortunes known,  
But the blind Ellen will relate her own ;—  
Yet ere we hear the story she can tell,  
On prouder sorrows let us briefly dwell.

I've often marvel'd, when by night, by day,  
I've mark'd the manners moving in my way,  
And heard the language and beheld the lives  
Of lass and lover, goddesses and wives,  
That books, which promise much of life to give,  
Should show so little how we truly live.

To me it seems, their females and their men  
Are but the creatures of the author's pen ;  
Nay, creatures borrow'd and again convey'd  
From book to book—the shadows of a shade :  
Life, if they'd search, would show them many  
a change ;

The ruin sudden and the misery strange !  
With more of grievous, base, and dreadful  
things,

Than novelists relate or poet sings :  
But they, who ought to look the world around,  
Spy out a single spot in fairy-ground ;

Where all, in turn, ideal forms behold,  
And plots are laid and histories are told.

Time have I lent—I would their debt were  
less—

To flow'ry pages of sublime distress ;  
And to the heroine's soul-distracting tears  
I early gave my sixpences and tears :  
Oft have I travell'd in these tender tales,  
To Darnley-Cottages and Maple-Vales,  
And watch'd the fair-one from the first-born  
sigh,

When Henry pass'd and gazed in passing by ;  
Till I beheld them pacing in the park,  
Close by a coppice where 'twas cold and dark ;  
When such affection with such fate appear'd,  
Want and a father to be shunn'd and fear'd,  
Without employment, prospect, cot, or cash,  
That I have judg'd th' heroic souls were rash.

Now shifts the scene,—the fair in tower  
confined,

In all things suffers but in change of mind ;  
Now woo'd by greatness to a bed of state,  
Now deeply threaten'd with a dungeon's  
grate ;

Till suffering much and being tried enough,  
She shines, triumphant maid!—temptation-  
proof.

Then was I led to vengeful monks, who mix  
With nymphs and swains, and play unpriestly  
tricks ;

Then view'd banditti who in forest wide,  
And cavern vast, indignant virgins hide ;  
Who, hemm'd with bands of sturdiest rogues  
about,

Find some strange succour, and come virgins  
out.

I've watch'd a win't'ry night on castle-walls,  
I've stalk'd by moonlight through deserted  
halls,

And when the weary world was sunk to rest,  
I've had such sights as—may not be ex-  
press'd.

Lo ! that chateau, the western tower de-  
cay'd,

The peasants shun it—they are all afraid ;  
For there was done a deed!—could walls  
reveal,

Or timbers tell it, how the heart would feel !  
Most horrid was it :—for, behold, the floor  
Has stain of blood, and will be clean no more :  
Hark to the winds ! which through the wide  
saloon

And the long passage send a dismal tune,—

Music that ghosts delight in ;—and now heed  
Yon bauteous nymph, who must unmask  
the deed ;

See ! with majestic sweep she swims alone  
Through rooms, all dreary, guided by a groan :  
Though windows rattle, and though tap'stries  
shake,

And the feet falter every step they take,  
'Mid moans and gibing sprights she silent goes,  
To find a something, which will soon expose  
The villanies and wiles of her determined foes :  
And, having thus adventured, thus endured,  
Fame, wealth, and lover, are for life secured.

Much have I fear'd, but am no more afraid,  
When some chaste beauty, by some wretch  
betray'd,

Is drawn away with such distracted speed,  
That she anticipates a dreadful deed :

Not so do I—Let solid walls impound  
The captive fair, and dig a moat around ;  
Let there be brazen locks and bars of steel,  
And keepers cruel, such as never feel ;  
With not a single note the purse supply,  
And when she begs, let men and maids deny :  
Be windows those from which she dares not  
fall,

And help so distant, 'tis in vain to call ;  
Still means of freedom will some power devise,  
And from the baffled ruffian snatch his prize.

To Northern Wales, in some sequester'd  
spot,

I've follow'd fair Louisa to her cot ;  
Where, then a wretched and deserted bride,  
The injured fair-one wish'd from man to hide ;  
Till by her fond repenting Belville found,  
By some kind chance—the straying of a hound,  
He at her feet craved mercy, nor in vain,  
For the relenting dove flew back again.

There's something rapturous in distress  
or, oh !

Could Clementina bear her lot of wo ?  
Or what she underwent could maiden un-  
dergo ?

The day was fix'd ; for so the lover sigh'd,  
So knelt and craved, he couldn't be denied ;  
When, tale most dreadful ! every hope  
adieu,—

For the fond lover is the brother too :  
All other griefs abate ; this monstrous grief  
Has no remission, comfort, or relief ;  
Four ample volumes, through each page  
disclose,—

Good Heaven protect us ! only woes on woes ;

Till some strange means afford a sudden view  
Of some vile plot, and every wo adieu !<sup>a</sup>

Now should we grant these beauties all  
endure

Severest pangs, they've still the speediest cure;  
Before one charm be wither'd from the face,  
Except the bloom, which shall again have  
place,

In wedlock ends each wish, in triumph all  
disgrace ;

And life to come, we fairly may suppose,  
One light, bright contrast to these wild dark  
woes.

These let us leave, and at other sorrows look,  
Too often seen, but seldom in a book ;  
Let her who felt, relate them :—on her chair  
The heroine sits—in former years, the fair,  
Now aged and poor ; but Ellen Orford knows,  
That we should humbly take what Heaven  
bestows.

' My father died—again my mother wed,  
And found the comforts of her life were fled ;  
Her angry husband, vex'd through half his  
years

By loss and troubles, fill'd her soul with fears :  
Their children many, and 'twas my poor place  
To nurse and wait on all the infant-race ;  
Labour and hunger were indeed my part,  
And should have strengthen'd an erroneous  
heart.

' Sore was the grief to see him angry come,  
And, teased with business, make distress at  
home :

The father's fury and the children's cries  
I soon could bear, but not my mother's sighs ;  
For she look'd back on comforts, and would  
say,

" I wrong'd thee, Ellen," and then turn away :  
Thus for my age's good, my youth was tried,  
And this my fortune till my mother died.

' So, amid sorrow much and little cheer—  
A common case, I pass'd my twentieth year ;  
For these are frequent evils ; thousands share  
An equal grief—the like domestic care.

' Then in my days of bloom, of health and  
youth,  
One, much above me, vow'd his love and  
truth :

We often met, he dreading to be seen,  
And much I question'd what such dread  
might mean ;

Yet I believed him true ; my simple heart  
And undirected reason took his part.

' Can he who loves me, whom I love, deceive ?  
Can I such wrong of one so kind believe,  
Who lives but in my smile, who trembles  
when I grieve ?

' He dared not marry, but we met to prove  
Whatsad encroachments and deceits has love :  
Weak that I was, when he, rebuked, withdrew,  
I let him see that I was wretched too ;  
When less my caution, I had still the pain  
Of his or mine own weakness to complain.

' Happy the lovers class'd alike in life,  
Or happier yet the rich endowing wife ;  
But most aggrieved the fond believing maid,  
Of her rich lover tenderly afraid :  
You judge th' event ; for grievous was my  
fate,

Painful to feel, and shameful to relate :  
Ah ! sad it was my burthen to sustain,  
When the least misery was the dread of pain ;  
When I have grieving told him my disgrace.  
And plainly mark'd indifference in his face.

' Hard ! with these fears and terrors to  
behold

The cause of all, the faithless lover cold ;  
Impatient grown at every wish denied,  
And barely civil, soothed and gratified ;  
Peevish when urged to think of vows so  
strong,

And angry when I spake of crime and wrong.  
' All this I felt, and still the sorrow grew,  
Because I felt that I deserved it too,  
And begg'd my infant stranger to forgive  
The mother's shame, which in herself must  
live.

' When known that shame, I, soon expell'd  
from home,  
With a frail sister shared a hovel's gloom ;  
There barely fed—(what could I more  
request ?)

My infant slumberer sleeping at my breast,  
I from my window saw his blooming bride,  
And my seducer smiling at her side ;  
Hope lived till then ; I sank upon the floor,  
And grief and thought and feeling were no  
more :

Although revived, I judg'd that life would  
close,

And went to rest, to wonder that I rose :  
My dreams were dismal, wheresoe'er I stray'd,  
I seem'd ashamed, alarm'd, despised, be-  
tray'd ;

Always in grief, in guilt, disgraced, forlorn,  
Mourning that one so weak, so vile, was born ;

The earth a desert, tumult in the sea,  
The birds affrighted fled from tree to tree,  
Obscured the setting sun, and every thing  
like me :

But Heav'n had mercy, and my need at length  
Urged me to labour and renew'd my strength.

'I strove for patience as a sinner must,  
Yet felt th' opinion of the world unjust :  
There was my lover, in his joy, esteem'd,  
And I in my distress, as guilty deem'd ;  
Yet sure, not all the guilt and shame belong  
To her who feels and suffers for the wrong :  
The cheat at play may use the wealth he's won,  
But is not honour'd for the mischief done ;  
The cheat in love may use each villain-art,  
And boast the deed that breaks the victim's  
heart.

'Four years were past; I might again have  
found

Some erring wish, but for another wound :  
Lovely my daughter grew, her face was fair,  
But no expression ever brighten'd there ;  
I doubted long, and vainly strove to make  
Some certain meaning of the words she spake ;  
But meaning there was none, and I survey'd  
With dread the beauties of my idiot-maid.

'Still I submitted ;—Oh ! 'tis meet and fit  
In all we feel to make the heart submit ;  
Gloomy and calm my days, but I had then,  
It seem'd, attractions for the eyes of men :  
The sober master of a decent trade  
O'erlook'd my errors, and his offer made ;  
Reason assented :—true, my heart denied,  
" But thou," I said, " shalt be no more my  
guide."

'When wed, our toil and trouble, pains and  
care,

Of means to live procured us humble share ;  
Five were our sons,—and we, though careful,  
found

Our hopes declining as the year came round :  
For I perceived, yet would not soon perceive,  
My husband stealing from my view to grieve ;  
Silent he grew, and when he spoke hesigh'd,  
And surly look'd and peevishly replied :  
Pensive by nature, he had gone of late  
To those who preach'd of destiny and fate,  
Of things fore-doom'd, and of election-grace,  
And how in vain we strive to run our race ;  
That all by works and moral worth we gain  
Is to perceive our care and labour vain ;  
That still the more we pay, our debts the  
more remain :

That he who feels not the mysterious call,  
Lies bound in sin, still grov'ling from the fall.  
My husband felt not :—our persuasion, prayer,  
And our best reason darken'd his despair ;  
His very nature changed ; he now reviled  
My former conduct,—he reproach'd my child :  
He talk'd of bastard ships, and cursed his bed,  
And from our kindness to concealment fled ;  
For ever to some evil change inclined,  
To every gloomy thought he lent his mind,  
Nor rest would give to us, nor rest himself  
could find ;

His son suspended saw him, long bereft  
Of life, nor prospect of revival left.

'With him died all our prospects, and once  
more

I shared th' allotments of the parish poor ;  
They took my children too, and this I know  
Was just and lawful, but I felt the blow :  
My idiot-maid and one unhealthy boy  
Were left, a mother's misery and her joy.

'Three sons I follow'd to the grave, and  
one—

Oh ! can I speak of that unhappy son ?  
Would all the memory of that time were  
fled,  
And all those horrors, with my child, were  
dead !

Before the world seduced him, what a grace  
And smile of gladness shone upon his face !  
Then he had knowledge ; finely would he  
write ;

Study to him was pleasure and delight ;  
Great was his courage, and but few could  
stand

Against the sleight and vigour of his hand ;  
The maidens loved him ;—when he came to  
die,

No, not the coldest could suppress a sigh :  
Here I must cease—how can I say, my child  
Was by the bad of either sex beguiled ?  
Worst of the bad—they taught him that the  
laws

Made wrong and right ; there was no other  
cause ;

That all religion was the trade of priests,  
And men, when dead, must perish like the  
beasts :—

And he, so lively and so gay before—

Ah ! spare a mother—I can tell no more.

'Int'rest was made that they should not  
destroy

The comely form of my deluded boy—

But pardon camenot; damp the place and deep  
Where he was kept, as they'd a tiger keep;  
For he, unhappy! had before them all  
Vow'd he'd escape, whatever might befall.

'He'd means of dress, and dress'd beyond  
his means,

And so to see him in such dismal scenes,  
I cannot speak it—cannot bear to tell  
Of that sad hour—I heard the passing-bell!

'Slowly they went; he smiled and look'd  
so smart,

Yet sure he shudder'd when he saw the cart,  
And gave a look—until my dying-day,  
That look will never from my mind away:  
Oft as I sit, and ever in my dreams,  
I see that look, and they have heard my  
screams.

'Now let me speak no more—yet all declared  
That one so young, in pity should be spared,  
And one so manly;—on his graceful neck,  
That chain of jewels may be proud to deck,  
To a small mole a mother's lips have press'd,—  
And there the cord—my breath is sore  
oppress'd.

'I now can speak again:—my elder boy  
Was that year drown'd,—a seaman in a hoy:  
He left a numerous race; of these would some  
In their young troubles to my cottage come,  
And these I taught—an humble teacher I—  
Upon their heavenly Parent to rely.

'Alas! I needed such reliance more:  
My idiot-girl, so simply gay before,  
Now wept in pain; some wretch had found  
a time,

Depraved and wicked, for that coward-crime;

I had indeed my doubt, but I suppress'd  
The thought that day and night disturb'd  
my rest;

She and that sick-pale brother—but why  
strive

To keep the terrors of that time alive?

'The hour arrived, the new, th'undreaded  
pain,

That came with violence and yet came in  
vain.

I saw her die: her brother too is dead;  
Nor own'd such crime—what is it that I  
dread?

'The parish-aid withdrawn, I look'd around,  
And in my school a bless'd subsistence found—  
My winter-calm of life; to be of use  
Would pleasant thoughts and heavenly hopes  
produce;

I loved them all; it soothed me to presage  
The various trials of their riper age,  
Then dwell on mine, and bless the Power  
who gave  
Pains to correct us, and remorse to save.

'Yes! these were days of peace, but they  
are past,—  
A trial came, I will believe, a last;

I lost my sight, and my employment gone,  
Useless I live, but to the day live on;  
Those eyes, which long the light of heaven  
enjoy'd,

Were not by pain, by agony destroy'd:  
My senses fail not all; I speak, I pray;  
By night my rest, my food I take by day;  
And as my mind looks cheerful to my end,  
I love mankind and call my God my friend.'

## LETTER XXI. THE POOR OF THE BOROUGH

ABEL KEENE

Coepesti melius quam desinis: ultima primis  
Cedunt. Dissimiles: hic vir et ille puer.

OVIN, *Deianira Herculi*. (*Heroid.* ix. 23, 24.)

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that,  
in the latter times, some shall depart from the  
faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and  
doctrines of devils.

*1st Epistle to Timothy*, iv. I.

Abel, a poor Man, Teacher of a School of the  
lower Order; is placed in the Office of a  
Merchant; is alarmed by Discourses of  
the Clerks; unable to reply; becomes a

Convert; dresses, drinks, and ridicules  
his former Conduct—The Remonstrance of  
his Sister, a devout Maiden—Its Effect—  
The Merchant dies—Abel returns to  
Poverty unpitied; but relieved—His abject  
Condition—His Melancholy—He wanders  
about: is found—His own Account of  
himself, and the Revolutions in his Mind.

A QUIET simple man was Abel Keene,  
He meant no harm, nor did he often mean:  
He kept a school of loud rebellious boys,  
And growing old, grew nervous with the  
noise;

When a kind merchant hired his useful pen,  
And made him happiest of accompting men,  
With glee he rose to every easy day,  
When half the labour brought him twice the pay.

There were young clerks, and there the merchant's son,  
Choice spirits all, who wish'd him to be one;  
It must, no question, give them lively joy,  
Hopes long indulged, to combat and destroy;  
At these they level'd all their skill and strength,—

He fell not quickly, but he fell at length :  
They quoted books, to him both bold and new,  
And scorn'd as fables all he held as true;  
'Such monkish stories and such nursery lies,'  
That he was struck with terror and surprise.

'What ! all his life had he the laws obey'd,  
Which they broke through and were not once afraid ?

Had he so long his evil passions check'd,  
And yet at last had nothing to expect ?  
While they their lives in joy and pleasure led,  
And then had nothing, at the end, to dread ?  
Was all his priest with so much zeal convey'd,  
A part ! a speech ! for which the man was paid ?

And were his pious books, his solemn prayers,  
Not worth one tale of the admired Voltaire's ?  
Then was it time, while yet some years remain'd,

To drink untroubled and to think unchain'd,  
And on all pleasures, which his purse could give,

Freely to seize, and while he lived, to live.'

Much time he passed in this important strife,

The bliss or bane of his remaining life ;  
For converts all are made with care and grief,  
And pangs attend the birth of unbelief ;  
Nor pass they soon ;—with awe and fear he took

The flow'ry way, and cast back many a look.

The youths applauded much his wise design,

With weighty reasoning o'er their evening wine ;

And much in private 'twould their mirth improve,

To hear how Abel spake of life and love ;

To hear him own what grievous pains it cost,

Ere the old saint was in the sinner lost,

Ere his poor mind with every deed alarm'd,  
By wit was settled, and by vice was charm'd.

For Abel enter'd in his bold career,  
Like boys on ice, with pleasure and with fear ;  
Lingering, yet longing for the joy, he went,  
Repenting now, now dreading to repent :  
With awkward pace, and with himself at war,  
Far gone, yet frighten'd that he went so far ;  
Oft for his efforts he'd solicit praise,  
And then proceed with blunders and delays :  
The young more aptly passion's calls pursue,  
But age and weakness start at scenes so new,  
And tremble when they've done, for all they dared to do.

At length example Abel's dread removed,  
With small concern he sought the joys he loved ;

Not resting here, he claim'd his share of fame,  
And first their votary, then their wit became ;  
His jest was bitter and his satire bold,  
When he his tales of formal brethren told ;  
What time with pious neighbours he discuss'd,  
Their boasted treasure and their boundless trust :

'Such were our dreams,' the jovial elder cried ;  
'Awake and live,' his youthful friends replied.

Now the gay clerk a modest drab despised,  
And clad him smartly as his friends advised ;  
So fine a coat upon his back he threw,  
That not an alley-boy old Abel knew ;  
Broad polish'd buttons blazed that coat upon,  
And just beneath the watch's trinkets shone,—  
A splendid watch, that pointed out the time,  
To fly from business and make free with crime :

The crimson waistcoat and the silken hose  
Rank'd the lean man among the Borough beaux :

His raven hair he cropp'd with fierce disdain,  
And light elastic locks encased his brain :  
More pliant pupil who could hope to find,  
So deck'd in person and so changed in mind ?

When Abel walk'd the streets, with pleasant mien

He met his friends, delighted to be seen ;  
And when he rode along the public way,  
No beau so gaudy and no youth so gay.

His pious sister, now an ancient maid,  
For Abel fearing, first in secret pray'd ;  
Then thus in love and scorn her notions she convey'd :

'Alas ! my brother ! can I see thee pace  
Hoodwink'd to hell, and not lament thy case,

Nor stretch my feeble hand to stop thy head-  
long race ?

Lo ! thou art bound ; a slave in Satan's chain,  
The righteous Abel turn'd the wretched Cain ;  
His brother's blood against the murderer cried,  
Against thee thine, unhappy suicide !  
Are all our pious nights and peaceful days,  
Our evening readings and our morning praise,  
Our spirits' comfort in the trials sent,  
Our hearts' rejoicings in the blessings lent,  
All that o'er grief a cheering influence shed,  
Are these for ever and for ever fled ?

'When in the years gone by, the trying years,  
When faith and hope had strife with wants  
and fears,

Thy nerves have trembled till thou couldst  
not eat

(Dress'd by this hand) thy mess of simple  
meat ;

When, grieved by fastings, gall'd by fates  
severe,

Slow pass'd the days of the successful year ;  
Still in these gloomy hours, my brother then  
Had glorious views, unseen by prosperous  
men :

And when thy heart has felt its wish denied,  
What gracious texts hast thou to grief applied ;  
Till thou hast enter'd in thine humble bed,  
By lofty hopes and heavenly musings fed ;  
Then I have seen thy lively looks express  
The spirit's comforts in the man's distress.

'Then didst thou cry, exulting, "Yes," 'tis fit,  
'Tis meet and right, my heart ! that we  
submit : "

And wilt thou, Abel, thy new pleasures weigh  
Against such triumphs ?—Oh ! repent and  
pray.

'What are thy pleasures ?—with the gay to  
sit,

And thy poor brain torment for awkward wit ;  
All thy good thoughts (thou hat'st them) to  
restrain,

And give a wicked pleasure to the vain ;  
Thy long lean frame by fashion to attire,  
That lads may laugh and wantons may  
admire ;

To raise the mirth of boys, and not to see,  
Unhappy maniac ! that they laugh at thee.

'These boyish follies, which alone the boy  
Can idly act or gracefully enjoy,  
Add new reproaches to thy fallen state,  
And make men scorn what they would only  
hate.

'What pains, my brother, dost thou take  
to prove

A taste for follies which thou canst not love ?  
Why do thy stiffening limbs the steed be-  
stride—

That lads may laugh to see thou canst not  
ride ?

And why (I feel the crimson tinge my cheek)  
Dost thou by night in Diamond-Alley sneak ?

'Farewell ! the parish will thy sister keep,  
Where she in peace shall pray and sing and  
sleep,

Save when for thee she mourns, thou wicked,  
wandering sheep !

When youth is fall'n, there's hope the young  
may rise,

But fallen age for ever hopeless lies :

Torn up by storms and placed in earth once  
more,

The younger tree may sun and soil restore ;  
But when the old and sapless trunk lies low,  
No care or soil can former life bestow ;  
Reserved for burning is the worthless tree ;  
And what, O Abel ! is reserved for thee ?

These angry words our hero deeply felt,  
Though hard his heart, and indisposed to melt !  
To gain relief he took a glass the more,  
And then went on as careless as before ;  
Thenceforth, unchecked, amusements he par-  
took,

And (save his ledger) saw no decent book ;  
Him found the merchant punctual at his task,  
And that perform'd, he'd nothing more to ask ;  
He cared not how old Abel played the fool,  
No master he, beyond the hours of school :  
Thus they proceeding, had their wine and joke  
Till merchant Dixon felt a warning stroke,  
And, after struggling half a gloomy week,  
Left his poor clerk another friend to seek.

Alas ! the son, who led the saint astray,  
Forgot the man whose follies made him gay ;  
He cared no more for Abel in his need,  
Than Abel cared about his hackney steed ;  
He now, alas ! had all his earnings spent,  
And thus was left to languish and repent ;  
No school nor clerkship found he in the place,  
Now lost to fortune, as before to grace.

For town-relief the grieving man applied,  
And begg'd with tears what some with scorn  
denied ;

Others look'd down upon the glowing vest,  
And frowning, ask'd him at what price he  
dress'd ?

Happy for him his country's laws are mild,  
They must support him, though they still  
reviled ;

Grieved, abject, scorn'd, insulted, and be-  
tray'd,

Of God unmindful, and of man afraid,—  
No more he talk'd ; 'twas pain, 'twas shame  
to speak,

His heart was sinking and his frame was weak.  
His sister died with such serene delight,  
He once again began to think her right ;  
Poor like himself, the happy spinster lay,  
And sweet assurance bless'd her dying-day :  
Poor like the spinster, he, when death was  
nigh,

Assured of nothing, felt afraid to die.  
The cheerful clerks whosometimes pass'd the  
door,

Just mention'd 'Abel !' and then thought  
no more.

So Abel, pondering on his state forlorn,  
Look'd round for comfort, and was chased by  
scorn.

And now we saw him on the beach reclined,  
Or causeless walking in the wintry wind ;  
And when it raised a loud and angry sea,  
He stood and gazed, in wretched reverie :  
He heeded not the frost, the rain, the  
snow ;

Close by the sea he walk'd alone and slow :  
Sometimes his frame through many an hour  
he spread

Upon a tombstone, moveless as the dead ;  
At last was there found a sad and silent place,  
There would he creep with slow and measured  
pace :

Then would he wander by the river's side,  
And fix his eyes upon the falling tide ;  
The deep dry ditch, the rushes in the fen,  
And mossy crag-pits were his lodgings then :  
There, to his discontented thoughts a prey,  
The melancholy mortal pined away.

The neighb'ring poor at length began to  
speak

Of Abel's ramblings—he'd been gone a week ;  
They knew not where, and little care they  
took

For one so friendless and so poor to look ;  
At last a stranger, in a pedler's shed,  
Beheld him hanging—he had long been dead.  
He left a paper, penn'd at sundry times,  
Intituled thus—'My Groanings and my  
Crimes !'

'I was a christian man, and none could lay  
Aught to my charge ; I walk'd the narrow  
way :

All then was simple faith, serene and pure,  
My hope was steadfast and my prospects sure ;  
Then was I tried by want and sickness sore,  
But these I clapp'd my shield of faith before,  
And cares and wants and man's rebukes I  
bore :

Alas ! new foes assail'd me ; I was vain,  
They stung my pride and they confused my  
brain :

Oh ! these deluders ! with what glee they saw  
Their simple dupe transgress the righteous  
law ;

'Twas joy to them to view that dreadful strife,  
When faith and frailty warr'd for more than  
life ;

So with their pleasures they beguiled the  
heart,

Then with their logic they allay'd the smart ;  
They proved (so thought I then) with reasons  
strong,

That no man's feelings ever led him wrong :  
And thus I went, as on the varnish'd ice,  
The smooth career of unbelief and vice.

Of would the youths, with sprightly speech  
and bold,

Their witty tales of naughty priests unfold ;  
'Twas all a craft," they said, "a cunning  
trade,

Not she the priests, but priests religion  
made :

So I believed : '—No, Abel ! to thy grief,  
So thou relinquish'dst all that was belief :—  
'I grew as very flint, and when the rest  
Laugh'd at devotion, I enjoy'd the jest ;  
But this all vanish'd like the morning-dew,  
When unemploy'd, and poor again I grew ;  
Yea ! I was doubly poor, for I was wicked  
too.

'The mouse that trespass'd and the treasure  
stole,

Found his lean body fitted to the hole ;  
Till having fattened, he was forced to stay,  
And, fasting, starve his stolen bulk away :  
Ah ! worse for me—grown poor, I yet re-  
main

In sinful bonds, and pray and fast in vain.

'At length I thought, although these friends  
of sin

Have spread their net and caught their prey  
therein ;



Though my hard heart could not for mercy  
call,

Because, though great my grief, my faith was  
small ;

Yet, as the sick on skilful men rely,  
The soul diseased may to a doctor fly.

' A famous one there was, whose skill had  
wrought

Cures past belief, and him the sinners sought;  
Numbers there were defiled by mire and filth,  
Whom he recover'd by his goodly tilth :—

"Come then," I said, "let me the man behold,  
And tell my case"—I saw him and I told.

"With trembling voice, "Oh! reverend  
sir," I said,

"I once believed, and I was then misled;  
And now such doubts my sinful soul beset,  
I dare not say that I'm a Christian yet;  
Canst thou, good sir, by thy superior skill,  
Inform my judgment and direct my will?  
Ah! give thy cordial; let my soul have rest,  
And be the outward man alone distress'd;  
For at my state I tremble."—"Tremble  
more,"

Said the good man, "and then rejoice there-  
fore ;

'Tis good to tremble ; prospects then are fair,  
When the lost soul is plunged in deep despair:  
Once thou wert simply honest, just and  
pure,

Whole, as thou thought'st, and never wish'd  
a cure :

Now thou hast plunged in folly, shame,  
disgrace ;

Now thou'rt an object meet for healing grace;  
No merit thine, no virtue, hope, belief,  
Nothing hast thou, but misery, sin, and grief,  
The best, the only titles to relief."

"What must I do," I said, "my soul to  
free?"

"—Do nothing, man; it will be done for  
thee."

"But must I not, my reverend guide, be-  
lieve?"

"—If thou art call'd, thou wilt the faith  
receive:"—

"But I repent not."—Angry he replied,  
"If thou art call'd, thou needest nought  
beside :

Attend on us, and if 'tis Heaven's decree,  
The call will come,—if not, ah! woe for thee."

'There then I waited, ever on the watch,  
A spark of hope, a ray of light to catch;  
His words fell softly like the flakes of snow,  
But I could never find my heart o'erflow:  
He cried aloud, till in the flock began  
The sigh, the tear, as caught from man to  
man ;

They wept and they rejoiced, and there was I,  
Hard as a flint, and as the desert dry :

To me no tokens of the call would come,  
I felt my sentence and received my doom;  
But I complain'd—"Let thy repinings cease,  
Oh! man of sin, for they thy guilt increase;  
It bloweth where it listeth;—die in peace."  
—"In peace, and perish?" I replied;  
"impart

Some better comfort to a burthen'd heart."—  
"Alas!" the priest return'd, "can I direct  
The heavenly call?—Do I proclaim th' elect?

Raise not thy voice against th' Eternal will,  
But take thy part with sinners and be still."<sup>1</sup>

'Alas! for me, no more the times of peace  
Are mine on earth—in death my pains may  
cease.

'Foes to my soul! ye young seducers, know,  
What serious ills from your amusements  
flow;

Opinions, you with so much ease profess,  
O'erwhelm the simple and their minds op-  
press :

Let such be happy, nor with reasons strong,  
That make them wretched, prove their  
notions wrong ;

Let them proceed in that they deem the  
way,

Fast when they will, and at their pleasure  
pray :

Yes, I have pity for my brethren's lot,  
And so had Dives, but it help'd him not:  
And is it thus?—I'm full of doubts:—Adieu!  
Perhaps his reverence is mistaken too.'

## LETTER XXII. THE POOR OF THE BOROUGH

PETER GRIMES

———Was a sordid soul,  
 Such as does murder for a meed :  
 Who but for fear knows no control,  
 Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,  
 Feels not the import of the deed :  
 One whose brute feeling ne'er aspires  
 Beyond his own more brute desires.

SCOTT, *Marmion*, Canto II. 22.

Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd  
 Came to my tent, and every one did threaten.  
 SHAKESPEARE, *Richard III*, Act v, Sc. 3.

The times have been,  
 That when the brains were out, the man  
 would die,  
 And there an end ; but now they rise again,  
 With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
 And push us from our stools.

Macbeth, Act iii, Sc. 4.

The Father of Peter a Fisherman—Peter's  
 early Conduct—His Grief for the old Man  
 —He takes an Apprentice—The Boy's  
 Suffering and Fate—A second Boy : how  
 he died—Peter acquitted—A third Ap-  
 prentice—A Voyage by Sea : the Boy does  
 not return—Evil Report on Peter : he is  
 tried and threatened—Lives alone—His  
 Melancholy and incipient Madness—Is  
 observed and visited—He escapes and is  
 taken : is lodged in a Parish-house :  
 Women attend and watch him—He speaks  
 in a Delirium : grows more collected—His  
 Account of his Feelings and visionary  
 Terrors previous to his Death.

OLD Peter Grimes made fishing his employ,  
 His wife he cabin'd with him and his boy,  
 And seem'd that life laborious to enjoy :  
 To town came quiet Peter with his fish,  
 And had of all a civil word and wish.  
 He left his trade upon the sabbath-day,  
 And took young Peter in his hand to pray :  
 But soon the stubborn boy from care broke  
 loose,  
 At first refused, then added his abuse :  
 His father's love he scorn'd, his power de-  
 fied,  
 But being drunk, wept sorely when he died.  
 Yes ! then he wept, and to his mind there  
 came  
 Much of his conduct, and he felt the shame, —

How he had oft the good old man reviled,  
 And never paid the duty of a child ;  
 How, when the father in his Bible read,  
 He in contempt and anger left the shed :  
 ' It is the word of life,' the parent cried ;  
 —' This is the life itself,' the boy replied ;  
 And while old Peter in amazement stood,  
 Gave the hot spirit to his boiling blood :—  
 How he, with oath and furious speech, began  
 To prove his freedom and assert the man ;  
 And when the parent check'd his impious rage,  
 How he had cursed the tyranny of age,—  
 Nay, once had dealt the sacrilegious blow  
 On his bare head, and laid his parent low ;  
 The father groan'd—' If thou art old,' said he,  
 ' And hast a son—thou wilt remember me :  
 Thy mother left me in a happy time,  
 Thou kill'dst not her—Heav'n spares the  
 double crime.'

On an inn-settle, in his maudlin grief,  
 This he revolved, and drank for his relief.

Now lived the youth in freedom, but  
 debarr'd  
 From constant pleasure, and he thought it  
 hard ;

Hard that he could not every wish obey,  
 But must awhile relinquish ale and play ;  
 Hard ! that he could not to his cards attend,  
 But must acquire the money he would spend.

With greedy eye he look'd on all he saw,  
 He knew not justice, and he laugh'd at law ;  
 On all he mark'd he stretch'd his ready hand ;  
 He fish'd by water, and he filch'd by land :  
 Oft in the night has Peter dropp'd his oar,  
 Fleed from his boat and sought for prey on  
 shore ;

Oft up the hedge-row glided, on his back  
 Bearing the orchard's produce in a sack,  
 Or farm-yard load, tugg'd fiercely from the  
 stack ;

And as these wrongs to greater numbers rose,  
 The more he look'd on all men as his foes.

He built a mud-wall'd hovel, where he kept  
 His various wealth, and there he oft-times  
 slept ;

But no success could please his cruel soul,  
 He wish'd for one to trouble and control ;  
 He wanted some obedient boy to stand  
 And bear the blow of his outrageous hand ;

And hoped to find in some propitious hour  
A feeling creature subject to his power.

Peter had heard there were in London  
then,—

Still have they being!—workhouse-clearing  
men,

Who, undisturb'd by feelings just or kind,  
Would parish-boys to needy tradesmen bind:  
They in their want a trifling sum would take,  
And toiling slaves of piteous orphans make.

Such Peter sought, and when a lad was  
found,

The sum was dealt him, and the slave was  
bound.

Some few in town observed in Peter's trap  
A boy, with jacket blue and woollen cap;  
But none inquired how Peter used the rope,  
Or what the bruise, that made the stripling  
stoop;

None could the ridges on his back behold,  
None sought him shiv'ring in the winter's  
cold;

None put the question,—‘Peter, dost thou  
give

The boy his food?—What, man! the lad  
must live:

Consider, Peter, let the child have bread,  
He'll serve thee better if he's stroked and fed.’  
None reason'd thus—and some, on hearing  
cries,

Said calmly, ‘Grimes is at his exercise.’

Pinn'd, beaten, cold, pinch'd, threaten'd,  
and abused—

His efforts punish'd and his food refused,—  
Awake tormented,—soon aroused from  
sleep,—

Struck if he wept, and yet compell'd to weep,  
The trembling boy dropp'd down and strove  
to pray,

Received a blow, and trembling turn'd away,  
Or sobb'd and hid his piteous face;—while he,  
The savage master, grinn'd in horrid glee:  
He'd now the power he ever loved to show,  
A feeling being subject to his blow.

Thus lived the lad, in hunger, peril, pain,  
His tears despised, his supplications vain:  
Compell'd by fear to lie, by need to steal,  
His bed uneasy and unblest'd his meal,  
For three sad years the boy his tortures bore,  
And then his pains and trials were no more.

‘How died he, Peter?’ when the people  
said,

He growl'd—‘I found him lifeless in his bed;

Then tried for softer tone, and sigh'd, ‘Poor  
Sam is dead.’

Yet murmurs were there, and some questions  
ask'd,—

How he was fed, how punish'd, and how  
task'd?

Much they suspected, but they little proved,  
And Peter pass'd untroubled and unmoved.

Another boy with equal ease was found,  
The money granted, and the victim bound;  
And what his fate?—One night it chanced  
he fell

From the boat's mast and perish'd in her  
well,

Where fish were living kept, and where the boy  
(So reason'd men) could not himself  
destroy:—

‘Yes! so it was,’ said Peter, ‘in his play,  
(For he was idle both by night and day,)  
He climb'd the main-mast and then fell  
below;’—

Then show'd his corpse and pointed to the  
blow:

‘What said the jury?’—they were long in  
doubt,

But sturdy Peter faced the matter out:  
So they dismiss'd him, saying at the time,  
‘Keep fast your hatchway when you've boys  
who climb.’

This hit the conscience, and he colour'd  
more

Than for the closest questions put before.

Thus all his fears the verdict set aside,  
And at the slave-shop Peter still applied.

Then came a boy, of manners soft and  
mild,—

Our seamen's wives with grief beheld the  
child;

All thought (the poor themselves) that he was  
one

Of gentle blood, some noble sinner's son,  
Who had, belike, deceived some humble  
maid,

Whom he had first seduced and then be-  
tray'd:—

However this, he seem'd a gracious lad,  
In grief submissive and with patience sad.

Passive he labour'd, till his slender frame  
Bent with his loads, and he at length was  
lame:

Strange that a frame so weak could bear so  
long

The grossest insult and the foulest wrong;

But there were causes—in the town they gave  
Fire, food, and comfort, to the gentle slave;  
And though stern Peter, with a cruel hand,  
And knotted rope, enforced the rude command,

Yet he consider'd what he'd lately felt,  
And his vile blows with selfish pity dealt.

One day such draughts the cruel fisher  
made,

He could not vend them in his borough-trade,  
But sail'd for London-mart: the boy was ill,  
But ever humbled to his master's will;  
And on the river, where they smoothly sail'd,  
He strove with terror and awhile prevail'd;  
But new to danger on the angry sea,  
He clung affrighten'd to his master's knee:  
The boat grew leaky and the wind was strong,  
Rough was the passage and the time was  
long;

His liquor fall'd, and Peter's wrath arose,—  
No more is known—the rest we must suppose,  
Or learn of Peter;—Peter says, he 'spied  
The stripling's danger and for harbour tried;  
Meantime the fish, and then th' apprentice  
died.'

The pitying women raised a clamour round,  
And weeping said, 'Thou hast thy 'prentice  
drown'd.'

Now the stern man was summon'd to the  
hall,  
To tell his tale before the burghers all:  
He gave th' account; profess'd the lad he  
loved,  
And kept his brazen features all unmoved.

The mayor himself with tone severe re-  
plied,—

'Henceforth with thee shall never boy abide;  
Hire thee a freeman, whom thou durst not  
beat,

But who, in thy despite, will sleep and eat:  
Free thou art now!—again shouldst thou  
appear,

Thou'lt find thy sentence, like thy soul,  
severe.'

Alas! for Peter not a helping hand,  
So was he hated, could he now command;  
Alone he row'd his boat, alone he cast  
His nets beside, or made his anchor fast;  
To hold a rope or hear a curse was none,—  
He toil'd and rail'd; he groan'd and swore  
alone.

Thus by himself compell'd to live each day,  
To wait for certain hours the tide's delay;

At the same times the same dull views to see,  
The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted  
tree;

The water only, when the tides were high,  
When low, the mud half-cover'd and half-dry;  
The sun-burnt tar that blisters on the planks,  
And bank-side stakes in their uneven ranks;  
Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,  
As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.

When tides were neap, and, in the sultry day,  
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made  
their way,

Which on each side rose swelling, and below  
The dark warm flood ran silently and slow;  
There anchoring, Peter chose from man to  
hide,

There hang his head, and view the lazy tide  
In its hot slimy channel slowly glide;

Where the small eels that left the deeper way  
For the warm shore, within the shallows  
play;

Where gaping muscles, left upon the mud,  
Slope their slow passage to the fallen flood;—  
Here dull and hopeless he'd lie down and trace  
How sidelong crabs had scrawl'd their crooked  
race;

Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry  
Of fishing gull or clanging golden-eye;  
What time the sea-birds to the marsh would  
come,

And the loud bittern, from the bull-rush  
home,

Gave from the salt-ditch side the bellowing  
boom:

He nursed the feelings these dull scenes  
produce,

And loved to stop beside the opening sluice;  
Where the small stream, confined in narrow  
bound,

Ran with a dull, unvaried, sadd'ning sound;  
Where all, presented to the eye or ear,  
Oppress'd the soul with misery, grief, and fear.

Besides these objects, there were places  
three,

Which Peter seem'd with certain dread to see;  
When he drew near them he would turn from  
each,

And loudly whistle till he pass'd the reach.\*

\* The reaches in a river are those parts which  
extend from point to point. Johnson has not the  
word precisely in this sense; but it is very  
common, and, I believe, used wheresoever a navi-  
gable river can be found in this country.

A change of scene to him brought no relief;  
In town, 'twas plain, men took him for a thief:  
The sailors' wives would stop him in the  
street,

And say, 'Now, Peter, thou'st no boy to  
beat:'

Infants at play, when they perceived him, ran,  
Warning each other—'That's the wicked  
man:'

He growl'd an oath, and in an angry tone  
Curs'd the whole place and wish'd to be alone.

Alone he was, the same dull scenes in view,  
And still more gloomy in his sight they grew:  
Though man he hated, yet employ'd alone  
At bootless labour, he would swear and groan,  
Cursing the shoals that glided by the spot,  
And gulls that caught them when his arts  
could not.

Cold nervous tremblings shook his sturdy  
frame,  
And strange disease—he couldn't say the  
name;

Wild were his dreams, and oft he rose in fright,  
Waked by his view of horrors in the night,—  
Horrors that would the sternest minds amaze,  
Horrors that demons might be proud to raise:  
And though he felt forsaken, grieved at heart,  
To think he lived from all mankind apart;  
Yet, if a man approach'd, in terrors he would  
start.

A winter pass'd since Peter saw the town,  
And summer-lodgers were again come down;  
These, idly curious, with their glasses spied  
The ships in bay as anchor'd for the tide,—  
The river's craft,—the bustle of the quay,—  
And sea-port views, which landmen love to see.

One, up the river, had a man and boat  
Seen day by day, now anchor'd, now afloat;  
Fisher he seem'd, yet used no net nor hook;  
Of sea-fowl swimming by no heed he took,  
But on the gliding waves still fix'd his lazy  
look:

At certain stations he would view the stream,  
As if he stood bewild'rd in a dream,  
Or that some power had chain'd him for a  
time,

To feel a curse or meditate on crime.

This known, some curious, some in pity  
went,

And others question'd—'Wretch, dost thou  
repent?'

He heard, he trembled, and in fear resign'd  
His boat: new terror fill'd his restless mind;

Furious he grew, and up the country ran,  
And there they seized him—a distemper'd  
man:—

Him we received, and to a parish-bed,  
Follow'd and curs'd, the groaning man was  
led.

Here when they saw him, whom they used  
to shun,

A lost, lone man, so harass'd and undone;  
Our gentle females, ever prompt to feel,  
Perceived compassion on their anger steal;  
His crimes they could not from their memories  
blot,

But they were grieved, and trembled at his lot.

A priest too came, to whom his words are  
told;

And all the signs they shudder'd to behold.

'Look! look!' they cried; 'his limbs  
with horror shake,

And as he grinds his teeth, what noise they  
make!

How glare his angry eyes, and yet he's not  
awake:

See! what cold drops upon his forehead stand,  
And how he clenches that broad bony hand.'

The priest attending, found he spoke at  
times

As one alluding to his fears and crimes:

'It was the fall,' he mutter'd, 'I can show  
The manner how—I never struck a blow:—'

And then aloud—'Unhand me, free my chain;

On oath, he fell—it struck him to the brain:—

Why ask my father?—that old man will swear

Against my life; besides, he wasn't there:—

What, all agreed?—Am I to die to-day?—

My Lord, in mercy, give me time to pray.'

Then, as they watch'd him, calmer he  
became,

And grew so weak he couldn't move his frame,  
But murmuring spake,—while they could see  
and hear

The start of terror and the groan of fear;  
See the large dew-beads on his forehead rise,  
And the cold death-drop glaze his sunken  
eyes;

Nor yet he died, but with unwonted force  
Seem'd with some fancied being to discourse:

He knew not us, or with accustom'd art  
He hid the knowledge, yet exposed his heart;

'Twas part confession and the rest defence,  
A madman's tale, with gleams of waking sense.

'I'll tell you all,' he said, 'the very day  
When the old man first placed them in my way:

My father's spirit—he who always tried  
To give me trouble, when he lived and died—  
When he was gone, he could not be content  
To see my days in painful labour spent,  
But would appoint his meetings, and he made  
Me watch at these, and so neglect my trade.

'Twas one hot noon, all silent, still, serene,  
No living being had I lately seen ;  
I paddled up and down and dipp'd my net,  
But (such his pleasure) I could nothing get,—  
A father's pleasure, when his toil was done,  
To plague and torture thus an only son !

And so I sat and look'd upon the stream,  
How it ran on, and felt as in a dream :  
But dream it was not ; no !—I fix'd my eyes  
On the mid stream and saw the spirits rise ;  
I saw my father on the water stand,  
And hold a thin pale boy in either hand ;  
And there they glided ghastly on the top  
Of the salt flood, and never touch'd a drop :  
I would have struck them, but they knew  
th' intent,

And smiled upon the oar, and down they went.

'Now, from that day, whenever I began  
To dip my net, therestood the hard old man—  
He and those boys : I humbled me and pray'd  
They would be gone ;—they heeded not, but  
stay'd :

Nor could I turn, nor would the boat go by,  
But gazing on the spirits, there was I :  
They bade me leap to death, but I was loth  
to die :

And every day, as sure as day arose,  
Would these three spirits meet me ere the  
close ;

To hear and mark them daily was my doom,  
And "Come," they said, with weak, sad  
voices, "come."

To row away with all my strength I try'd,  
But there were they, hard by me in the tide,  
The three unbodied forms—and "Come,"  
still "come," they cried.

'Fathers should pity—but this old man shook  
His hoary locks, and froze me by a look :  
Thrice, when I struck them, through the  
water came

A hollow groan, that weaken'd all my frame :  
"Father !" said I, "have mercy :"—He  
replied,

I know not what—the angry spirit lied,—  
"Didst thou not draw thy knife ?" said  
he :—'Twas true,

But I had pity and my arm withdrew :

He cried for mercy which I kindly gave,  
But he has no compassion in his grave.

'There were three places, where they ever  
rose,—

The whole long river has not such as those,—  
Places accursed, where, if a man remain,  
He'll see the things which strike him to the  
brain ;

And there they made me on my paddle lean,  
And look at them for hours ;—accursed scene !  
When they would glide to that smooth eddy-  
space,

Then bid me leap and join them in the place ;  
And at my groans each little villain sprite  
Enjoy'd my pains and vanish'd in delight.

'In one fierce summer-day, when my poor  
brain

Was burning hot and cruel was my pain,  
Then came this father-foe, and there he stood  
With his two boys again upon the flood ;  
There was more mischief in their eyes, more  
glee

In their pale faces when they glared at me :  
Still did they force me on the oar to rest,  
And when they saw me fainting and oppress'd,  
He, with his hand, the old man, scoop'd the  
flood,

And there came flame about him mix'd with  
blood ;

He bade me stoop and look upon the place,  
Then flung the hot-red liquor in my face ;  
Burning it blazed, and then I roar'd for pain,  
I thought the demons would have turn'd my  
brain.

'Still there they stood, and forced me to  
behold

A place of horrors—they cannot be told—  
Where the flood open'd, there I heard the  
shriek

Of tortured guilt—no earthly tongue can  
speak :

"All days alike ! for ever !" did they say,  
"And unremitted torments every day"—  
Yes, so they said :—But here he ceased and  
gazed

On all around, affrighten'd and amazed ;  
And still he tried to speak, and look'd in dread  
Of frighten'd females gathering round his  
bed ;

Then dropp'd exhausted and appear'd at rest,  
Till the strong foe the vital powers possess'd :  
Then with an inward, broken voice he cried,  
'Again they come,' and mutter'd as he died.

## LETTER XXIII. PRISONS

Poenâ autem vehemens ac multo saevior illis,  
Quas et Caedicius gravis invenit et Rhadamanthus,  
Nocte dieque suum gestare in pectore testem.  
JUVENAL, *Sat.* 13. 196-8.

Learn, good soul,  
To think our former state a happy dream,  
From which awaked, the truth of what we are  
Shows us but this,—I am sworn brother sweet  
To grim Necessity, and he and I  
Will keep a league till death.

*Richard II*, Act v, Sc. 1.

The Mind of Man accommodates itself to all  
Situations ; Prisons otherwise would be intolerable—Debtors : their different Kinds : three particularly described ; others more briefly—An arrested Prisoner : his Account of his Feelings and his Situation—The Alleviations of a Prison—Prisoners for Crimes—Two condemned : a vindictive Female : a Highwayman—The Interval between Condemnation and Execution—His Feelings as the Time approaches—His Dream.

'Tis well—that man to all the varying states  
Of good and ill his mind accommodates ;  
He not alone progressive grief sustains,  
But soon submits to unexperienced pains :  
Change after change, all climes his body bears ;  
His mind repeated shocks of changing cares :  
Faith and fair virtue arm the nobler breast ;  
Hope and mere want of feeling aid the rest.  
Or who could bear to lose the balmy air  
Of summer's breath, from all things fresh and fair,

With all that man admires or loves below ;  
All earth and water, wood and vale bestow,  
Where rosy pleasures smile, whence real  
blessings flow ;

With sight and sound of every kind that lives,  
And crowning all with joy that freedom gives ?

Who could from these, in some unhappy  
day,

Bear to be drawn by ruthless arms away,  
To the vile nuisance of a noisome room,  
Where only insolence and misery come ?  
(Save that the curious will by chance appear,  
Or some in pity drop a fruitless tear ;)  
To a damp prison, where the very sight  
Of the warm sun is favour and not right ;

Where all we hear or see the feelings shock,  
The oath and groan, the fetter and the lock ?  
Who could bear this and live ?—Oh !  
many a year

All this is borne, and miseries more severe ;  
And some there are, familiar with the scene,  
Who live in mirth, though few become serene.

Far as I might the inward man perceive,  
There was a constant effort—not to grieve ;  
Not to despair, for better days would come,  
And the freed debtor smile again at home :  
Subdued his habits, he may peace regain,  
And bless the woes that were not sent in vain.

Thus might we class the debtors here confined,

The more deceived, the more deceitful kind ;  
Here are the guilty race, who mean to live  
On credit, that credulity will give ;  
Who purchase, conscious they can never pay ;  
Who know their fate, and traffic to betray ;  
On whom no pity, fear, remorse, prevail,  
Their aim a statute, their resource a jail ;—  
These as the public spoilers we regard,  
No dun so harsh, no creditor so hard.

A second kind are they, who truly strive  
To keep their sinking credit long alive ;  
Success, nay prudence, they may want, but yet  
They would be solvent, and deplore a debt ;  
All means they use, to all expedients run,  
And are by slow, sad steps, at last undone :  
Justly, perhaps, you blame their want of skill,  
But mourn their feelings and absolve their will.

There is a debtor, who his trifling *all*  
Spreads in a shop ; it would not fill a stall :  
There at one window his temptation lays,  
And in new modes disposes and displays :  
Above the door you shall his name behold,  
And what he vends in ample letters told,  
The words *repository, warehouse*, all  
He uses to enlarge concerns so small :  
He to his goods assigns some beauty's name,  
Then in her reign, and hopes they'll share her  
fame ;

And talks of credit, commerce, traffic, trade,  
As one important by their profit made ;  
But who can paint the vacancy, the gloom,  
And spare dimensions of one backward room ?  
Wherein he dines, if so 'tis fit to speak,  
Of one day's herring and the morrow's steak ;

An anchorite in diet, all his care  
Is to display his stock and vend his ware.

Long waiting hopeless, then he tries to meet  
A kinder fortune in a distant street;  
There he again displays, increasing yet  
Corroding sorrow and consuming debt:  
Alas! he wants the requisites to rise—  
The true connexions, the availing ties;  
They who proceed on certainties advance,  
These are not times when men prevail by chance:

But still he tries, till, after years of pain,  
He finds, with anguish, he has tried in vain.  
Debtors are these on whom 'tis hard to press,  
'Tis base, impolitic, and merciless.

To these we add a miscellaneous kind,  
By pleasure, pride, and indolence confined;  
Those whom no calls, no warnings could  
divert,

The unexperienced and the inexpert;  
The builder, idler, schemer, gamster, sot,—  
The follies different, but the same their lot;  
Victims of horses, lasses, drinking, dice,  
Of every passion, humour, whim, and vice.

See! that sad merchant, who but yesterday

Had a vast household in command and pay;  
He now entreats permission to employ  
A boy he needs, and then entreats the boy.

And there sits one, improvident but kind,  
Bound for a friend, whom honour could not  
bind;

Sighing, he speaks to any who appear,  
'A treach'rous friend—'twas that which sent  
me here:

I was too kind,—I thought I could depend  
On his bare word—he was a treach'rous  
friend.'

A female too!—it is to her a home,  
She came before—and she again will come:  
Her friends have pity; when their anger  
drops,

They take her home;—she's tried her schools  
and shops—

Plan after plan;—but fortune would not  
mend,

She to herself was still the treach'rous friend;  
And whoso'er began, all here was sure to  
end:

And there she sits, as thoughtless and as gay,  
As if she'd means, or not a debt to pay—  
Or knew to-morrow she'd be call'd away—  
Or felt a shilling and could dine to-day.

While thus observing, I began to trace  
The sober'd features of a well-known face—  
Looks once familiar, manners form'd to please,  
And all illumined by a heart at ease:  
But fraud and flattery ever claim'd a part  
(Still unresisted) of that easy heart;  
But he at length beholds me—'Ah! my  
friend!

And have thy pleasures this unlucky end?'—

'Too sure,' he said, and smiling as he sigh'd;  
'I went astray, though prudence seem'd my  
guide;

All she proposed I in my heart approved,  
And she was honour'd, but my pleasure  
loved—

Pleasure, the mistress to whose arms I fled,  
From wife-like lectures angry prudence read.

'Whyspeak the madness of a life like mine,  
The powers of beauty, novelty, and wine?  
Why paint the wanton smile, the venal vow,  
Or friends whose worth I can appreciate now?

'Oft I perceived my fate, and then would say,  
I'll think to-morrow, I must live to-day:

So am I here—I own the laws are just—  
And here, where thought is painful, think I  
must:

But speech is pleasant, this discourse with  
thee

Brings to my mind the sweets of liberty,  
Breaks on the sameness of the place, and  
gives

The doubtful heart conviction that it lives.

'Let me describe my anguish in the hour  
When law detain'd me and I felt its power.

'When in that shipwreck, this I found my  
shore,

And join'd the wretched, who were wreck'd  
before;

When I perceived each feature in the face,  
Pinch'd through neglect or turbid by disgrace;  
When in these wasting forms affliction stood  
In my afflicted view, it chill'd my blood;—

And forth I rush'd, a quick retreat to make,  
Till a loud laugh proclaim'd the dire mistake:

But when the groan had settled to a sigh,  
When gloom became familiar to the eye,

When I perceive how others seem to rest,  
With every evil ranking in my breast,—

Led by example, I put on the man,  
Sing off my sighs, and trifle as I can.

'Homer! nay Pope! (for never will I seek  
Applause for learning—nought have I with  
Greek)



Gives us the secrets of his pagan hell,  
Where ghost with ghost in sad communion  
dwell ;

Where shade meets shade, and round the  
gloomy meads

They glide and speak of old heroic deeds,—  
What fields they conquer'd, and what foes  
they slew

And sent to join the melancholy crew.

'When a new spirit in that world was found,  
A thousand shadowy forms came fitting  
round ;

Those who had known him, fond inquiries  
made,—

"Of all we left, inform us, gentle shade,  
Now as we lead thee in our realms to dwell,  
Our twilight groves, and meads of asphodel."

'What paints the poet, is our station here,  
Where we like ghosts and fitting shades  
appear :

This is the hell he sings, and here we meet,  
And former deeds to new-made friends repeat;  
Heroic deeds, which here obtain us fame,  
And are in fact the causes why we came :  
Yes ! this dim region is old Homer's hell,  
Abate but groves and meads of asphodel.

'Here, when a stranger from your world  
we spy,

We gather round him and for news apply ;  
He hears unheeding, nor can speech endure,  
But shivering gazes on the vast obscure :

We smiling pity, and by kindness show  
We felt his feelings and his terrors know ;  
Then speak of comfort—time will give him  
sight,

Where now 'tis dark ; where now 'tis wo—  
delight.

"Have hope," we say, "and soon the  
place to thee

Shall not a prison but a castle be ;  
When to the wretch whom care and guilt  
confound,

The world's a prison, with a wider bound ;  
Go where he may, he feels himself confined,  
And wears the fetters of an abject mind."

'But now adieu ! those giant keys appear,  
Thou art not worthy to be inmate here :  
Go to thy world, and to the young declare  
What we, our spirits and employments, are ;  
Tell them how we the ills of life endure,  
Our empire stable, and our state secure ;  
Our dress, our diet, for their use describe,  
And bid them haste to join the gen'rous tribe:

Go to thy world, and leave us here to dwell,  
Who to its joys and comforts bid farewell.'

Farewell to these ; but other scenes I view,  
And other griefs, and guilt of deeper hue ;  
Where conscience gives to outward ills her  
pain,

Gloom to the night, and pressure to the chain:  
Here separate cells awhile in misery keep  
Two doom'd to suffer : there they strive for  
sleep ;

By day indulged, in larger space they range,  
Their bondage certain, but their bounds have  
change.

One was a female, who had grievous ill  
Wrought in revenge, and she enjoy'd it still :  
With death before her, and her fate in view,  
Unsated vengeance in her bosom grew :

Sullen she was and threat'ning ; in her eye  
Glared the stern triumph that she dared to  
die :

But first a being in the world must leave—  
'Twas once reproach ; 'twas now a short  
reprieve.

She was a pauper bound, who early gave  
Her mind to vice, and doubly was a slave ;  
Upbraided, beaten, held by rough control,  
Revenge sustain'd, inspired, and fill'd her soul:  
She fired a full-stored barn, confess'd the fact,  
And laugh'd at law and justified the act :  
Our gentle vicar tried his powers in vain,  
She answer'd not, or answer'd with disdain ;  
Th'approaching fate she heard without a sigh,  
And neither cared to live nor fear'd to die.

Not so he felt, who with her was to pay  
The forfeit, life—with dread he view'd the day,  
And that short space which yet for him  
remain'd,

Till with his limbs his faculties were chain'd :  
He paced his narrow bounds some ease to find,  
But found it not,—no comfort reach'd his  
mind :

Each sense was palsied ; when he tasted food,  
He sigh'd and said, 'Enough—'tis very good.'  
Since his dread sentence, nothing seem'd to be  
As once it was—he seeing could not see,  
Nor hearing, hear aright ;—when first I came  
Within his view, I fancied there was shame,  
I judged resentment ; I mistook the air,—  
These fainter passions live not with despair ;  
Or but exist and die:—Hope, fear, and love,  
Joy, doubt, and hate, may other spirits move,  
But touch not his, who every waking hour  
Has one fix'd dread, and always feels its power.

'But will not mercy?'—No! she cannot plead

For such an outrage;—'twas a cruel deed :  
He stopp'd a timid traveller;—to his breast,  
With oaths and curses, was the danger  
press'd :—

No! he must suffer; pity we may find  
For one man's pangs, but must not wrong  
mankind.

Still I behold him, every thought employ'd  
On one dire view!—all others are destroy'd;  
This makes his features ghastly, gives the tone  
Of his few words resemblance to a groan :  
He takes his tasteless food, and when 'tis done,  
Counts up his meals, now lessen'd by that one;  
For expectation is on time intent,  
Whether he brings us joy or punishment.

Yes! e'en in sleep the impressions all  
remain,

He hears the sentence and he feels the chain;  
He sees the judge and jury, when he shakes,  
And loudly cries, 'Not guilty,' and awakes :  
Then chilling tremblings o'er his body creep,  
Till worn-out nature is compell'd to sleep.

Now comes the dream again; it shows  
each scene,  
With each small circumstance that comes  
between—

The call to suffering and the very deed—  
There crowds go with him, follow, and pre-  
cede;

Some heartless shout, some pity, all condemn,  
While he in fancied envy looks at them :  
He seems the place for that sad act to see,  
And dreams the very thirst which then will be :  
A priest attends—it seems, the one he knew,  
In his best days, beneath whose care he grew.

At this his terrors take a sudden flight,  
He sees his native village with delight;  
The house, the chamber, where he once array'd  
His youthful person; where he knelt and  
pray'd :

Then too the comforts he enjoy'd at home,  
The days of joy; the joys themselves are  
come ;—

The hours of innocence;—the timid look  
Of his loved maid, when first her hand he took  
And told his hope; her trembling joy appears,  
Her forced reserve and his retreating fears.

All now is present;—'tis a moment's gleam  
Of former sunshine—stay, delightful dream!  
Let him within his pleasant garden walk,  
Give him her arm, of blessings let them talk.

Yes! all are with him now, and all the while  
Life's early prospects and his Fanny's smile:  
Then come his sister and his village-friend,  
And he will now the sweetest moments spend  
Life has to yield;—No! never will he find  
Again on earth such pleasure in his mind :  
He goes through shrubby walks these friends  
among :

Love in their looks and honour on the tongue:  
Nay, there's a charm beyond what nature  
shows,

The bloom is softer and more sweetly glows;—  
Pierced by no crime, and urged by no desire  
For more than true and honest hearts require,  
They feel the calm delight, and thus proceed  
Through the green lane,—then linger in the  
mead,—

Stray o'er the heath in all its purple bloom,—  
And pluck the blossom where the wild bees  
hum ;

Then through the broomy bound with ease  
they pass,

And press the sandy sheep-walk's slender grass,  
Where dwarfish flowers among the gorse are  
spread,

And the lamb browses by the linnet's bed ;  
Then 'cross the bounding brook they make  
their way

O'er its rough bridge—and there behold the  
bay !—

The ocean smiling to the fervid sun—

The waves that faintly fall and slowly run—  
The ships at distance and the boats at hand;  
And now they walk upon the sea-side sand,  
Counting the number and what kind they be,  
Ships softly sinking in the sleepy sea :

Now arm in arm, now parted, they behold  
The glitt'ring waters on the shingles roll'd :  
The timid girls, half dreading their design,  
Dip the small foot in the retarded brine,  
And search for crimson weeds, which spread—  
ing flow,

Or lie like pictures on the sand below ;

With all those bright red pebbles that the sun  
Through the small waves so softly shines upon;  
And those live lucid jellies which the eye  
Delights to trace as they swim glitt'ring by :  
Pearl-shells and rubied star-fish they admire,  
And will arrange above the parlour-fire,—  
Tokens of bliss !—' Oh ! horrible ! a wave  
Roars as it rises—save me, Edward ! save !'  
She cries :—Alas ! the watchman on his way  
Calls and lets in—truth, terror, and the day !

## LETTER XXIV. SCHOOLS

Tu quoque ne metuas, quamvis schola verbere  
multo

Increpet et truculenta senex geret ora  
magister;

Degeneras animos timor arguit; at tibi  
consta

Intrepidus, nec te clamor plagaeque sonantes,  
Nec matutinis agitet formido sub horis,  
Quòd sceptrum vibrat ferulae, quòd multa  
supellex

Virgea quod molis scuticam praetexit aluta,  
Quòd fervent trepido subsellia vestra tumultu,  
Pompa loci, et vani fugiatur scena timoris.

ATSONIUS in *Protreptico ad Nepotem*.

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,—  
We love the play-place of our early days;  
The scene is touching, and the heart is stone  
That feels not at that sight—and feels at none.  
The wall on which we tried our graving skill;  
The very name we carved subsisting still;  
The bench on which we sat while deep em-  
ploy'd,

Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, yet not  
destroyed.

The little ones unbutton'd, glowing hot,  
Playing our games, and on the very spot;  
As happy as we once to kneel and draw  
The chalky ring and knuckle down at taw.

This fond attachment to the well known place,  
When first we started into life's long race,  
Maintains its hold with such unfailling sway,  
We feel it e'en in age and at our latest day.

COWPER, *Tirocinium, a Review of Schools*.

Schools of every Kind to be found in the  
Borough—The School for Infants—The  
School Preparatory: the Sagacity of the  
Mistress in foreseeing Character—Day-  
Schools of the lower Kind—A Master with  
Talents adapted to such Pupils: one of  
superior Qualifications—Boarding-Schools:  
that for young Ladies: one going first to  
the Governess, one finally returning Home  
—School for Youth: Master and Teacher;  
various Dispositions and Capacities—The  
Miser-Boy—The Boy-Bully—Sons of  
Farmers: how amused—What Study will  
effect, examined—A College Life: one  
sent from his College to a Benefice; one  
retained there in Dignity—The Advantages  
in either Case not considerable—Where  
then the Good of a literary Life?—  
Answered—Conclusion.

To every class we have a school assign'd,  
Rules for all ranks and food for every mind:  
Yet one there is, that small regard to rule  
Or study pays, and still is deem'd a school;  
That, where a deaf, poor, patient widow sits,  
And awes some thirty infants as she knits;  
Infants of humble, busy wives, who pay  
Some trifling price for freedom through the  
day.

At this good matron's hut the children meet,  
Who thus becomes the mother of the street:  
Her room is small, they cannot widely stray,—  
Her threshold high, they cannot run away:  
Though deaf, she sees the rebel heroess shout,—  
Though lame, her white rod nimbly walks  
about;

With band of yarn she keeps offenders in,  
And to her gown the sturdiest rogue can pin:  
Aided by these, and spells, and tell-tale birds,  
Her power they dread and reverence her words.

To learning's second seats we now proceed,  
Where humming students gilded primers read;  
Or books with letters large and pictures gay,  
To make their reading but a kind of play—  
'Reading made Easy,' so the titles tell;  
But they who read must first begin to spell:  
There may be profit in these arts, but still  
Learning is labour, call it what you will;  
Upon the youthful mind a heavy load,  
Nor must we hope to find the royal road.  
Some will their easy steps to science show,  
And some to heav'n itself their by-way know;  
Ah! trust them not,—who fame or bliss  
would share,

Must learn by labour, and must live by care.

Another matron of superior kind,  
For higher schools prepares the rising mind;  
*Preparatory* she her learning calls,  
The step first made to colleges and halls.

She early sees to what the mind will grow,  
Nor abler judge of infant-powers I know;  
She sees what soon the lively will impede,  
And how the steadier will in turn succeed;  
Observes the dawn of wisdom, fancy, taste,  
And knows what parts will wear and what  
will waste:

She marks the mind too lively, and at once  
Sees the gay coxcomb and the rattling  
dunce.

Long has she lived, and much she loves to trace  
 Her former pupils, now a lordly race;  
 Whom when she sees rich robes and furs bedeck,  
 She marks the pride which once she strove to check:  
 A burghess comes, and she remembers well  
 How hard her task to make his worship spell;  
 Cold, selfish, dull, inanimate, unkind,  
 'Twas but by anger he display'd a mind:  
 Now civil, smiling, complaisant, and gay,  
 The world has worn th' unsocial crust away;  
 That sullen spirit now a softness wears,  
 And, save by fits, e'en dulness disappears:  
 But still the matron can the man behold,  
 Dull, selfish, hard, inanimate, and cold.  
 A merchant passes,—' probity and truth,  
 Prudence and patience, mark'd thee from thy youth.'  
 Thus she observes, but oft retains her fears  
 For him, who now with name unstain'd appears;  
 Nor hope relinquishes, for one who yet  
 Is lost in error and involved in debt;  
 For latent evil in that heart she found,  
 More open here, but here the core was sound.  
 Various our day-schools: here behold we one  
 Empty and still:—the morning duties done,  
 Soil'd, tatter'd, worn, and thrown in various heaps,  
 Appear their books, and there confusion sleeps;  
 The workmen all are from the Babel fled,  
 And lost their tools, till the return they dread:  
 Meantime the master, with his wig awry,  
 Prepares his books for business by-and-by:  
 Now all th' insignia of the monarch laid  
 Beside him rest, and none stand by afraid;  
 He, while his troop light-hearted leap and play,  
 Is all intent on duties of the day;  
 No more the tyrant stern or judge severe,  
 He feels the father's and the husband's fear.  
 Ah! little think the timid trembling crowd,  
 That one so wise, so powerful, and so proud,  
 Should feel himself, and dread the humble ills  
 Of rent-day charges and of coalman's bills;  
 That while they mercy from their judge implore,  
 He fears himself—a knocking at the door;

And feels the burthen as his neighbour states  
 His humble portion to the parish-rates.

They sit th' allotted hours, then eager run,  
 Rushing to pleasure when the duty's done;  
 His hour of leisure is of different kind,  
 Then cares domestic rush upon his mind,  
 And half the ease and comfort he enjoys,  
 Is when surrounded by slates, books, and boys.

Poor Reuben Dixon has the noisiest school  
 Of ragged lads, who ever bow'd to rule;  
 Low in his price—the men who heave our coals,

And clean our causeways, send him boys in shoals:

To see poor Reuben, with his fry beside,—  
 Their half-check'd rudeness and his half-scorn'd pride,—

Their room, the sty in which th' assembly meet,

In the close lane behind the Northgate-street;  
 T' observe his vain attempts to keep the peace,  
 Till tolls the bell, and strife and troubles cease,—

Calls for our praise; his labour praised deserves,  
 But not our pity; Reuben has no nerves:  
 'Mid noise and dirt, and stench, and play, and prate,

He calmly cuts the pen or views the slate.

But Leonard!—yes, for Leonard's fate I grieve,

Who loathes the station which he dares not leave:

He cannot dig, he will not beg his bread,  
 All his dependence rests upon his head;  
 And deeply skill'd in sciences and arts,  
 On vulgar lads he wastes superior parts.

Alas! what grief that feeling mind sustains,  
 In guiding hands and stirring torpid brains;  
 He whose proud mind from pole to pole will move,

And view the wonders of the worlds above;  
 Who thinks and reasons strongly:—hard his fate,

Confined for ever to the pen and slate:  
 True, he submits, and when the long dull day  
 Has slowly pass'd, in weary tasks, away,  
 To other worlds with cheerful view he looks,  
 And parts the night between repose and books.

Amid his labours, he has sometimes tried  
 To turn a little from his cares aside;  
 Pope, Milton, Dryden, with delight has seized,  
 His soul engaged and of his trouble eased:

When, with a heavy eye and ill-done sum,  
No part conceived, a stupid boy will come;  
Then Leonard first subdues the rising frown,  
And bids the blockhead lay his blunders down;  
O'er which disgusted he will turn his eye,  
To his sad duty his sound mind apply,  
And, vex'd in spirit, throw his pleasures by.

Turn we to schools which more than these  
afford—

The sound instruction and the wholesome  
board ;

And first our school for ladies :—pity calls  
For one soft sigh, when we behold these walls,  
Placed near the town, and where, from  
window high,

The fair, confined, may our free crowds espy,  
With many a stranger gazing up and down,  
And all the envied tumult of the town ;  
May, in the smiling summer-eve, when they  
Are sent to sleep the pleasant hours away,  
Behold the poor (whom they conceive the  
bless'd)

Employ'd for hours, and grieved they cannot  
rest.

Here the fond girl, whose days are sad and  
few

Since dear mamma pronounced the last adieu,  
Looks to the road, and fondly thinks she  
hears

The carriage-wheels, and struggles with her  
tears :

All yet is new, the misses great and small,  
Madam herself, and teachers, odious all ;  
From laughter, pity, nay command, she turns,  
But melts in softness, or with anger burns ;  
Nauseates her food, and wonders who can  
sleep

On such mean beds, where she can only weep ;  
She scorns condolence—but to all she hates  
Slowly at length her mind accommodates ;  
Then looks on bondage with the same concern  
As others felt, and finds that she must learn  
As others learn'd—the common lot to share,  
To search for comfort and submit to care.

There are, 'tis said, who on these seats  
attend,

And to these ductile minds destruction vend ;  
Wretches (to virtue, peace, and nature, foes)  
To these soft minds, their wicked trash expose ;  
Seize on the soul, ere passions take the sway,  
And lead the heart, ere yet it feels, astray :  
Smugglers obscene!—and can there be who take  
Infernal pains, the sleeping vice to wake ?

Can there be those, by whom the thought  
defiled

Enters the spotless bosom of a child ?

By whom the ill is to the heart convey'd,  
Who lead the foe, not yet in arms, their aid,  
And sap the city-walls before the siege be laid ?

Oh ! rather skulking in the by-ways steal,  
And rob the poorest traveller of his meal ;  
Burst through the humblest trader's bolted  
door ;

Bear from the widow's hut her winter-store ;  
With stolen steed, on highways take your  
stand,

Your lips with curses arm'd, with death your  
hand ;—

Take all but life—the virtuous more would say,  
Take life itself, dear as it is, away,  
Rather than guilty thus the guileless soul  
betray.

Years pass away—let us suppose them past,  
Th' accomplish'd nymph for freedom looks  
at last ;

All hardships over, which a school contains,  
The spirit's bondage and the body's pains ;  
Where teachers make the heartless, trembling  
set

Of pupils suffer for their own regret ;  
Where winter's cold, attack'd by one poor fire,  
Chills the fair child, commanded to retire ;  
She felt it keenly in the morning air,  
Keenly she felt it at the evening prayer.

More pleasant summer ; but then walks were  
made,

Not a sweet ramble, but a slow parade ;  
They moved by pairs beside the hawthorn-  
hedge,

Only to set their feelings on an edge ;  
And now at eve, when all their spirits rise,  
Are sent to rest, and all their pleasure dies ;  
Where yet they all the town alert can see,  
And distant plough-boys pacing o'er the lea.

These and the tasks successive masters  
brought—

The French they conn'd, the curious works  
they wrought :

The hours they made their taper fingers strike,  
Note after note, all dull to them alike ;  
Their drawings, dancings on appointed days,  
Playing with globes, and getting parts of plays ;  
The tender friendships made 'twixt heart  
and heart,

When the dear friends had nothing to im-  
part :—

All ! all ! are over ;—now th' accomplish'd  
 maid  
 Longs for the world, of nothing there afraid :  
 Dreams of delight invade her gentle breast,  
 And fancied lovers rob the heart of rest ;  
 At the paternal door a carriage stands,  
 Love knits their hearts and Hymen joins  
 their hands.

Ah !—world unknown ! how charming is  
 thy view,  
 Thy pleasures many, and each pleasure new :  
 Ah !—world experienced ! what of thee is  
 told ?

How few thy pleasures, and those few how old !

Within a silent street, and far apart  
 From noise of business, from a quay or mart,  
 Stands an old spacious building, and the din  
 You hear without, explains the work within ;  
 Unlike the whispering of the nymphs, this  
 noise

Loudly proclaims a ' boarding-school for  
 boys : '

The master heeds it not, for thirty years  
 Have render'd all familiar to his ears ;  
 He sits in comfort, 'mid the various sound  
 Of mingled tones for ever flowing round ;  
 Day after day he to his task attends,—  
 Unvaried toil, and care that never ends :  
 Boys in their works proceed ; while his employ  
 Admits no change, or changes but the boy ;  
 Yet time has made it easy ;—he beside  
 Has power supreme, and power is sweet to  
 pride :

But grant him pleasure ;—what can teachers  
 feel,

Dependent helpers always at the wheel ?  
 Their power despised, their compensation  
 small,

Their labour dull, their life laborious all ;  
 Set after set the lower lads to make  
 Fit for the class which their superiors take ;  
 The road of learning for a time to track  
 In roughest state, and then again go back :  
 Just the same way on other troops to wait,—  
 Attendants fix'd at learning's lower gate.

The day-tasks now are over,—to their  
 ground

Rush the gay crowd with joy-compelling  
 sound ;

Glad to illude the burthens of the day,  
 The eager parties hurry to their play :  
 Then in these hours of liberty we find  
 The native bias of the opening mind ;

They yet possess not skill the mask to place,  
 And hide the passions glowing in the face ;  
 Yet some are found—the close, the sly, the  
 mean,

Who know already all must not be seen.

Lo ! one who walks apart, although so  
 young,

He lays restraint upon his eye and tongue ;  
 Nor will he into scrapes or dangers get,  
 And half the school are in the stripling's debt :  
 Suspicious, timid, he is much afraid  
 Of trick and plot :—he dreads to be betray'd ;  
 He shuns all friendship, for he finds they lend,  
 When lads begin to call each other friend :  
 Yet self with self has war ; the tempting sight  
 Of fruit on sale provokes his appetite ;—  
 See ! how he walks the sweet seduction by ;  
 That he is tempted, costs him first a sigh,—  
 'Tis dangerous to indulge, 'tis grievous to  
 deny !

This he will choose, and whispering asks the  
 price,

The purchase dreadful, but the portion nice ;  
 Within the pocket he explores the pence ;  
 Without, temptation strikes on either sense,  
 The sight, the smell ;—but then he thinks again  
 Of money gone ! while fruit nor taste remain.  
 Meantime there comes an eager thoughtless  
 boy,

Who gives the price and only feels the joy :  
 Example dire ! the youthful miser stops,  
 And slowly back the treasured coinage drops :  
 Heroic deed ! for should he now comply,  
 Can he to-morrow's appetite deny ?  
 Beside, these spendthrifts who so friendly live,  
 Cloy'd with their purchase, will a portion  
 give :—

Here ends debate, he buttons up his store,  
 And feels the comfort that it burns no more.

Unlike to him the tyrant-boy, whose sway  
 All hearts acknowledge ; him the crowds obey :  
 At his command they break through every  
 rule ;

Whoever governs, he controls the school :  
 'Tis not the distant emperor moves their  
 fear,

But the proud viceroy who is ever near.

Verres could do that mischief in a day,  
 For which not Rome, in all its power, could  
 pay ;

And these boy-tyrants will their slaves  
 distress,

And do the wrongs no master can redress :

The mind they load with fear: it feels disdain  
For its own baseness; yet it tries in vain  
To shake th' admitted power;—the coward  
comes again:

'Tis more than present pain these tyrants give,  
Long as we're life some strong impressions  
live;

And these young ruffians in the soul will sow  
Seeds of all vices that on weakness grow.

Hark! at his word the trembling young-  
lings flee,

Where he is walking none must walk but he;  
See! from the winter-fire the weak retreat,  
His the warm corner, his the favourite seat,  
Save when he yields it to some slave to keep  
Awhile, then back, at his return, to creep:  
At his command his poor dependants fly,  
And humbly bribe him as a proud ally;  
Flatter'd by all, the notice he bestows,  
Is gross abuse, and bantering and blows;  
Yet he's a dunce, and, spite of all his fame  
Without the desk, within he feels his shame:  
For there the weaker boy, who felt his scorn,  
For him corrects the blunders of the morn;  
And he is taught, unpleasant truth! to find  
The trembling body has the prouder mind.

Hark! to that shout, that burst of empty  
noise,

From a rude set of bluff, obstreperous boys;  
They who, like colts let loose, with vigour  
bound,

And thoughtless spirit, o'er the beaten ground;  
Fearless they leap, and every youngster feels  
His Alma active in his hands and heels.

These are the sons of farmers, and they  
come

With partial fondness for the joys of home;  
Their minds are coursing in their fathers'  
fields,

And e'en the dream a lively pleasure yields;  
They, much enduring, sit th' allotted hours,  
And o'er a grammar waste their sprightly  
powers;

They dance; but them can measured steps  
delight,

Whom horse and hounds to daring deeds  
excite?

Nor could they bear to wait from meal to  
meal,

Did they not slyly to the chamber steal,  
And there the produce of the basket seize,  
The mother's gift! still studious of their  
ease.

Poor Alma, thus oppress'd, forbears to rise,  
But rests or revels in the arms and thighs.\*

'But is it sure that study will repay  
The more attentive and forbearing?'—Nay!

The farm, the ship, the humble shop have each  
Gains which severest studies seldom reach.

At college place a youth, who means to  
raise

His state by merit and his name by praise;  
Still much he hazards; there is serious strife  
In the contentions of a scholar's life:

Not all the mind's attention, care, distress,  
Nor diligence itself, ensure success:

His jealous heart a rival's power may dread,  
Till its strong feelings have confused his head,  
And, after days and months, nay, years of  
pain,

He finds just lost the object he would gain.

But grant him this and all such life can give,  
For other prospects he begins to live;

Begins to feel that man was form'd to look  
And long for other objects than a book:

In his mind's eye his house and glebe he sees,  
And farms and talks with farmers at his ease;

And time is lost, till fortune sends him forth  
To a rude world unconscious of his worth;

There in some petty parish to reside,  
The college-boast, then turn'd the village-

guide;

And though awhile his flock and dairy please,  
He soon reverts to former joys and ease,

Glad when a friend shall come to break his  
rest,

And speak of all the pleasures they possess'd,  
Of masters, fellows, tutors, all with whom

They shared those pleasures, never more to  
come;

Till both conceive the times by bliss endear'd,  
Which once so dismal and so dull appear'd.

But fix our scholar, and suppose him  
crown'd

With all the glory gain'd on classic ground;  
Suppose the world without a sigh resign'd,

And to his college all his care confined;  
Give him all honours that such states allow,

The freshman's terror and the tradesman's  
bow;

Let his apartments with his taste agree,  
And all his views be those he loves to see;

\* Should any of my readers find themselves at a loss in this place, I beg leave to refer them to a poem of Prior, called *Alma, or the Progress of the Mind*.

Let him each day behold the savoury treat,  
For which he pays not, but is paid to eat ;  
These joys and glories soon delight no more,  
Although withheld, the mind is vex'd and  
sore ;

The honour too is to the place confined,  
Abroad they know not each superior mind :  
Strangers no *wranglers* in these figures see,  
Nor give they worship to a high degree ;  
Unlike the prophet's is the scholar's case,  
His honour all is in his dwelling-place :  
And there such honours are familiar things ;  
What is a monarch in a crowd of kings ?  
Like other sovereigns he's by forms address'd,  
By statutes govern'd and with rules oppress'd.

When all these forms and duties die away,  
And the day passes like the former day,  
Then of exterior things at once bereft,  
He's to himself and one attendant left ;  
Nay, John too goes ; nor aught of service more  
Remains for him ; he gladly quits the door,  
And as he whistles to the college-gate,  
He kindly pities his poor master's fate.

Books cannot always please, however good ;  
Minds are not ever craving for their food ;  
But sleep will soon the weary soul prepare  
For cares to-morrow that were this day's care :  
For forms, for feasts, that sundry times have  
past,

And formal feasts that will for ever last.

' But then from study will no comforts  
rise ? '—

Yes ! such as studious minds alone can prize ;  
Comforts, yea !—joys ineffable they find,  
Who seek the prouder pleasures of the mind :  
The soul, collected in those happy hours,  
Then makes her efforts, then enjoys her  
powers ;

And in those seasons feels herself repaid,  
For labours past and honours long delay'd.

No ! 'tis not worldly gain, although by  
chance

The sons of learning may to wealth advance ;  
Nor station high, though in some favouring  
hour

The sons of learning may arrive at power ;  
Nor is it glory, though the public voice  
Of honest praise will make the heart rejoice :  
But 'tis the mind's own feelings give the joy,  
Pleasures she gathers in her own employ—

Pleasures that gain or praise cannot bestow,  
Yet can dilate and raise them when they  
flow.

For this the poet looks the world around,  
Where form and life and reasoning man are  
found :

He loves the mind, in all its modes, to trace,  
And all the manners of the changing race ;  
Silent he walks the road of life along,  
And views the aims of its tumultuous throng :  
He finds what shapes the Proteus-passions  
take,

And what strange waste of life and joy they  
make,

And loves to show them in their varied ways,  
With honest blame or with unflattering praise :  
'Tis good to know, 'tis pleasant to impart,  
These turns and movements of the human  
heart :

The stronger features of the soul to paint,  
And make distinct the latent and the faint ;  
Man as he is, to place in all men's view,  
Yet none with rancour, none with scorn  
pursue :

Nor be it ever of my portraits told—

' Here the strong lines of malice we behold.'—

THIS let me hope, that when in public view  
I bring my pictures, men may feel them true ;  
' This is a likeness,' may they all declare,  
' And I have seen him, but I know not where :'  
For I should mourn the mischief I had done,  
If as the likeness all would fix on one.

Man's vice and crime I combat as I can,  
But to his God and conscience leave the man ;  
I search (a Quixotte !) all the land about,  
To find its giants and enchanters out,  
(The giant-folly, the enchanter-vice,  
Whom doubtless I shall vanquish in a trice ;)  
But is there man whom I would injure ?—no !  
I am to him a fellow, not a foe,—  
A fellow-sinner, who must rather dread  
The bolt, than hurl it at another's head.

No ! let the guiltless, if there such be found,  
Launch forth the spear, and deal the deadly  
wound ;

How can I so the cause of virtue aid,  
Who am myself attainted and afraid ?  
Yet as I can, I point the powers of rhyme,  
And, sparing criminals, attack the crime.



## NOTES TO 'THE BOROUGH'

## LETTER I

Note 1, page 109, line 22.

*Sits the large lily as the water's queen.*  
The white water-lily, *Nymphaea alba*.

Note 2, page 109, line 31.

*Sampire-banks.*

The jointed glasswort. *Salicornia* is here meant, not the true sampire, the *Critheum maritimum*.

Note 3, page 109, line 31.

*Salt-wort.*

The *salsola* of botanists.

Note 4, page 110, line 42.

*And planks which curve and crackle in the smoke.*

The curvature of planks for the sides of a ship, &c., is, I am informed, now generally made by the power of steam. Fire is nevertheless still used for boats and vessels of the smaller kind.

Note 5, page 111, lines 51 and 52.

*And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,  
Lift the fair sail, and cheat th' experienced eye.*

Of the effect of these mists, known by the name of fog-banks, wonderful and indeed incredible relations are given; but their property of appearing to elevate ships at sea, and to bring them in view, is, I believe, generally acknowledged.

## LETTER II

Note 1, page 114, lines 13 and 14.

*In three short hours shall thy presuming hand  
Th' effect of three slow centuries command?*

If it should be objected, that centuries are not slower than hours, because the speed of time must be uniform, I would answer, that I understand so much, and mean that they are slower in no other sense, than because they are not finished so soon.

Note 2, page 114, line 26.

*Can the small germ upon the substance view.*

This kind of vegetation, as it begins upon siliceous stones, is very thin, and frequently not to be distinguished from the surface of the flint. The *byssus jolithus* of Linnaeus

(*lepraria jolithus* of the present system), an adhesive carmine crust on rocks and old buildings, was, even by scientific persons, taken for the substance on which it spread. A great variety of these minute vegetables are to be found in some parts of the coast, where the beach, formed of stones of various kinds, is undisturbed, and exposed to every change of weather; in this situation, the different species of lichen, in their different stages of growth, have an appearance interesting and agreeable even to those who are ignorant of, and indifferent to the cause.

Note 3, page 114, lines 45 and 46.

*Each has its motto: some contrived to tell,  
In monkish rhyme, the uses of a bell.*

The several purposes for which bells are used are expressed in two Latin verses of this kind.

Note 4, page 114, line 68.

*But monuments themselves memorials need.*

*Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris.*

JUVENAL, *Sat.* 10, l. 146.

Note 5, page 116, line 50.

*Regard the dead, but to the living live.*

It has been observed to me, that in the first part of the story I have represented this young woman as resigned and attentive to her duties; from which it should appear that the concluding advice is unnecessary; but if the reader will construe the expression 'to the living live,' into the sense—live entirely for them, attend to duties only which are real, and not those imposed by the imagination, I shall have no need to alter the line which terminates the story.

## LETTER IV

Note 1, page 122, line 12.

*May those excel by Solway-Moss destroy'd.*

For an account of this extraordinary and interesting event, I refer my readers to the Journals of the year 1772.

Note 2, page 123, line 84.

*They will not study, and they dare not fight.*

Some may object to this assertion; to whom I beg leave to answer, that I do not

use the word *fight* in the sense of the Jew Mendoza.

Note 3, page 124, line 28.

*Regret thy misery, and lament thy crimes.*

See the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter xxviii. and various other places.

Note 4, page 124, line 38.

*Nor think of Julian's boast and Julian's fate.*

His boast, that he would rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem; his fate (whatever becomes of the miraculous part of the story), that he died before the foundation was laid.

Note 5, page 125, line 2.

*Samson is grace, and carries all alone.*

Whoever has attended to the books or preaching of these enthusiastic people, must have observed much of this kind of absurd and foolish application of scripture history; it seems to them as reasoning.

#### LETTER V

Note 1, page 130, line 6.

*He lived, nor dream'd of corporation-doles.*

I am informed that some explanation is here necessary, though I am ignorant for what class of my readers it can be required. Some corporate bodies have actual property, as appears by their receiving rents; and they obtain money on the admission of members into their society: this they may lawfully share perhaps. There are, moreover, other doles, of still greater value, of which it is not necessary for me to explain the nature, or to inquire into the legality.

#### LETTER VIII

Note 1, page 140, line 8.

*Is 'Harmony in Uproar' all day long.*

The title of a short piece of humour by Arbuthnot.

Note 2, page 141, line 36

*Nor less the place of curious plant he knows.*

In botanical language '*the habitat*,' the favourite soil or situation of the more scarce species.

Note 3, page 141, line 48.

*This is no shaded, run-off, pin-eyed thing*

This, it must be acknowledged, is contrary to the opinion of Thomson, and I believe of some other poets, who, in describing the varying hues of our most beautiful flowers, have considered them as lost and blended with

each other; whereas their beauty, in the eye of a florist (and I conceive in that of the uninitiated also), depends upon the distinctness of their colours: the stronger the bounding line, and the less they break into the neighbouring tint, so much the richer and more valuable is the flower esteemed.

Note 4, page 141, line 48.

*Pin-eyed.*

An auricula, or any other single flower, is so called when the *stigma* (the part which arises from the seed-vessel) is protruded beyond the tube of the flower, and becomes visible.

Note 5, page 141, line 51.

*Which shed such beauty on my fair Bizarre.*

This word, so far as it relates to flowers, means those variegated with three or more colours irregularly and indeterminately.

#### LETTER IX

Note 1, page 144, line 23.

*Those living jellies which the flesh inflame.*

Some of the smaller species of the *Medusa* (sea-nettle) are exquisitely beautiful: their form is nearly oval, varied with serrated longitudinal lines; they are extremely tender, and by no means which I am acquainted with can be preserved, for they soon dissolve in either spirit of wine or water, and lose every vestige of their shape, and indeed of their substance: the larger species are found in mis-shapen masses of many pounds weight; these, when handled, have the effect of the nettle, and the stinging is often accompanied or succeeded by the more unpleasant feeling, perhaps in a slight degree resembling that caused by the torpedo.

Note 2, page 144, line 34.

*And quickly vegetates a vital breed.*

Various tribes and species of marine *vermes* are here meant: that which so nearly resembles a vegetable in its form, and perhaps, in some degree, manner of growth, is the coralline called by naturalists *Sertularia*, of which there are many species in almost every part of the coast. The animal protrudes its many claws (apparently in search of prey) from certain pellucid vesicles which proceed from a horny, tenacious, branchy stem.

Note 3, page 144, line 41.

*Myriads of living points: th' unaided eye  
Can but the fire and not the form descry.*

These are said to be a minute kind of

animal of the same class ; when it does not shine, it is invisible to the naked eye.

Note 4, page 144, line 50.

*On weeds that sparkle, and on waves that blaze.*

For the cause or causes of this phenomenon, which is sometimes, though rarely, observed on our coasts, I must refer the reader to the writers on natural philosophy and natural history.

Note 5, page 145, line 52.

*Content would chee thee trudging to thine home.*

This is not offered as a reasonable source of contentment, but as one motive for resignation : there would not be so much envy if there were more discernment.

#### LETTER XVIII

Note 1, page 182, line 6.

*With glossy leaf and tawny bloom below.*

This scenery is, I must acknowledge, in a certain degree like that heretofore described in the Village ; but that also was a maritime country :—if the objects be similar, the pictures must (in their principal features) be alike, or be bad pictures. I have varied them as much as I could, consistently with my wish to be accurate.

Note 2, page 182, line 8.

*Form the contracted Flora of the town.*

The reader unacquainted with the language of botany is informed, that the Flora of a place means the vegetable species it contains, and is the title of a book which describes them.

#### LETTER XX

Note 1, page 187, line 5.

*Where thrift and lavender, and lad's-love bloom.*

The lad's or boy's love of some counties is the plant southernwood, the *artemisia abrotanum* of botanists.

Note 2, page 189, line 2.

*Of some vile plot, and every wo adieu !*

As this incident points out the work alluded to, I wish it to be remembered, that the gloomy tenour, the querulous melancholy of the story, is all I censure. The language of the writer is often animated, and is, I believe, correct ; the characters well drawn, and the manners described from real life ; but the perpetual occurrence of sad events, the protracted list of teasing and perplexing mischances, joined with much waspish in-  
vective, unallayed by pleasantry or sprightliness, and these continued through many

hundred pages, render publications, intended for amusement and executed with ability, heavy and displeasing :—you find your favourite persons happy in the end ; but they have teased you so much with their perplexities by the way, that you were frequently disposed to quit them in their distresses.

#### LETTER XXI

Note 1, page 195, line 23.

*But take thy part with sinners and be still.*

In a periodical work for the month of June last, the preceding dialogue is pronounced to be a most abominable caricature, if meant to be applied to Calvinists in general, and greatly distorted, if designed for an individual : now the author in his preface has declared, that he takes not upon him the censure of any sect or society for their opinions ; and the lines themselves evidently point to an individual, whose sentiments they very fairly represent, without any distortion whatsoever. In a pamphlet intitled ' A Cordial for a Sin-despairing Soul,' originally written by a teacher of religion, and lately re-published by another teacher of greater notoriety, the reader is informed that after he had full assurance of his salvation, the Spirit entered particularly into the subject with him ; and, among many other matters of like nature, assured him that ' his sins were fully and freely forgiven, as if they had never been committed ; not for any act done by him, whether believing in Christ, or repenting of sin ; nor yet for the sorrows and miseries he endured, nor for any service he should be called upon in his militant state, but for his own name and for his glory's sake,' \* &c. And the whole drift and tenour of the book is to the same purpose, viz. the uselessness of all religious duties, such as prayer, contrition, fasting, and good works : he shows the evil done by reading such books as the Whole Duty of Man, and the Practice of Piety ; and complains heavily of his relation, an Irish bishop, who wanted him to join with the household in family prayer : in fact, the whole work inculcates that sort of quietism which this dialogue alludes to, and that without any recommendation of attendance on the teachers of the Gospel, but rather holding forth encouragement to the supineness of man's nature ; by the information that he in vain looks for acceptance by the employment of his talents, and that his hopes of glory are rather extinguished than raised by any application to the means of grace.

\* *Cordial*, &c., page 87.

# TALES

[1812]

TO HER GRACE ISABELLA

DUCHESS DOWAGER OF RUTLAND

MADAM,

THE dedication of works of literature to persons of superior worth and eminence appears to have been a measure early adopted, and continued to the present time ; so that whatever objections have been made to the language of dedicators, such addresses must be considered as perfectly consistent with reason and propriety ; in fact, superior rank and elevated situation in life naturally and justly claim such respect ; and it is the prerogative of greatness to give countenance and favour to all who appear to merit and to need them : it is likewise the prerogative of every kind of superiority and celebrity, of personal merit when peculiar or extraordinary, of dignity, elegance, wealth, and beauty ; certainly of superior intellect and intellectual acquirements : every such kind of eminence has its privilege, and being itself an object of distinguished approbation, it gains attention for whomsoever its possessor distinguishes and approves.

Yet the causes and motives for an address of this kind rest not entirely with the merit of the patron, the feelings of the author him-

self having their weight and consideration in the choice he makes : he may have gratitude for benefits received, or pride not illaudable in aspiring to the favour of those whose notice confers honour ; or he may entertain a secret but strong desire of seeing a name in the entrance of his work which he is accustomed to utter with peculiar satisfaction, and to hear mentioned with veneration and delight.

Such, madam, are the various kinds of eminence for which an author on these occasions would probably seek, and they meet in your grace ; such too are the feelings by which he would be actuated, and they centre in me : let me therefore entreat your grace to take this book into your favour and protection, and to receive it as an offering of the utmost respect and duty, from,

May it please Your Grace,

Your Grace's

Most obedient, humble,

And devoted servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

MUSTON, *July 31, 1812.*

## PREFACE

THAT the appearance of the present work before the public is occasioned by a favourable reception of the former two, I hesitate not to acknowledge ; because, while the confession may be regarded as some proof of gratitude, or at least of attention from an author to his readers, it ought not to be considered as an indication of vanity. It is unquestionably very pleasant to be assured that our labours are well received ; but, nevertheless, this must not be taken for a just

and full criterion of their merit : publications of great intrinsic value have been met with so much coolness, that a writer who succeeds in obtaining some degree of notice should look upon himself rather as one favoured than meritorious, as gaining a prize from Fortune, and not a recompense for desert ; and, on the contrary, as it is well known that books of very inferior kind have been at once pushed into the strong current of popularity, and are there kept buoyant by the force of the

stream, the writer who acquires not this adventitious help may be reckoned rather as unfortunate than undeserving; and from these opposite considerations it follows, that a man may speak of success without incurring justly the odium of conceit, and may likewise acknowledge a disappointment without an adequate cause for humiliation or self-reproach.

But were it true that something of the complacency of self-approbation would insinuate itself into an author's mind with the idea of success, the sensation would not be that of unalloyed pleasure; it would perhaps assist him to bear, but it would not enable him to escape, the mortification he must encounter from censures, which, though he may be unwilling to admit, yet he finds himself unable to confute; as well as from advice, which, at the same time that he cannot but approve, he is compelled to reject.

Reproof and advice, it is probable, every author will receive, if we except those who merit so much of the former, that the latter is contemptuously denied them; now of these, reproof, though it may cause more temporary uneasiness, will in many cases create less difficulty, since errors may be corrected when opportunity occurs: but advice, I repeat, may be of such nature, that it will be painful to reject, and yet impossible to follow it; and in this predicament I conceive myself to be placed. There has been recommended to me, and from authority which neither inclination nor prudence leads me to resist, in any new work I might undertake, an unity of subject, and that arrangement of my materials which connects the whole and gives additional interest to every part; in fact, if not an Epic Poem, strictly so denominated, yet such composition as would possess a regular succession of events, and a catastrophe to which every incident should be subservient, and which every character, in a greater or less degree, should conspire to accomplish.

In a Poem of this nature, the principal and inferior characters in some degree resemble a general and his army, where no one pursues his peculiar objects and adventures, or pursues them in unison with the movements and grand purposes of the whole body; where there is a community of interests and a sub-

ordination of actors: and it was upon this view of the subject, and of the necessity for such distribution of persons and events, that I found myself obliged to relinquish an undertaking, for which the characters I could command, and the adventures I could describe, were altogether unfitted.

But if these characters which seemed to be at my disposal were not such as would coalesce into one body, nor were of a nature to be commanded by one mind, so neither on examination did they appear as an unconnected multitude, accidentally collected, to be suddenly dispersed; but rather beings of whom might be formed groups and smaller societies, the relations of whose adventures and pursuits might bear that kind of similitude to an Heroic Poem, which these minor associations of men (as pilgrims on the way to their saint, or parties in search of amusement, travellers excited by curiosity, or adventurers in pursuit of gain) have in points of connexion and importance with a regular and disciplined army.

Allowing this comparison, it is manifest that while much is lost for want of unity of subject and grandeur of design, something is gained by greater variety of incident and more minute display of character, by accuracy of description and diversity of scene: in these narratives we pass from gay to grave, from lively to severe, not only without impropriety, but with manifest advantage. In one continued and connected Poem, the reader is, in general, highly gratified or severely disappointed; by many independent narratives, he has the renovation of hope, although he has been dissatisfied, and a prospect of reiterated pleasure, should he find himself entertained.

I mean not, however, to compare these different modes of writing as if I were balancing their advantages and defects before I could give preference to either; with me the way I take is not a matter of choice, but of necessity: I present not my Tales to the reader as if I had chosen the best method of ensuring his approbation, but as using the only means I possessed of engaging his attention.

It may probably be remarked that Tales, however dissimilar, might have been connected by some associating circumstance to

which the whole number might bear equal affinity, and that examples of such union are to be found in Chaucer, in Boccace, and other collectors and inventors of Tales, which, considered in themselves, are altogether independent; and to this idea I gave so much consideration as convinced me that I could not avail myself of the benefit of such artificial mode of affinity. To imitate the English poet, characters must be found adapted to their several relations, and this is a point of great difficulty and hazard: much allowance seems to be required even for Chaucer himself, since it is difficult to conceive that on any occasion the devout and delicate Prioress, the courtly and valiant Knight, and 'the poure good Man the persone of a Towne,' would be the voluntary companions of the drunken Miller, the licentious Sompnour, and 'the Wanton Wife of Bath,' and enter into that colloquial and travelling intimacy which, if a common pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas may be said to excuse, I know nothing beside (and certainly nothing in these times) that would produce such effect. Boccace, it is true, avoids all difficulty of this kind, by not assigning to the ten relators of his hundred Tales any marked or peculiar characters; nor though there are male and female in company, can the sex of the narrator be distinguished in the narration. To have followed the method of Chaucer might have been of use, but could scarcely be adopted, from its difficulty; and to have taken that of the Italian writer would have been perfectly easy, but could be of no service: the attempt at union therefore has been relinquished, and these relations are submitted to the public, connected by no other circumstance than their being the productions of the same author, and devoted to the same purpose, the entertainment of his readers.

It has been already acknowledged, that these compositions have no pretensions to be estimated with the more lofty and heroic kind of poems, but I feel great reluctance in admitting that they have not a fair and legitimate claim to the poetic character: in vulgar estimation, indeed, all that is not prose passes for poetry; but I have not ambition of so humble a kind as to be satisfied with a concession which requires nothing in

the poet, except his ability for counting syllables; and I trust something more of the poetic character will be allowed to the succeeding pages than what the heroes of the Dunciad might share with the author: nor was I aware that by describing, as faithfully as I could, men, manners, and things, I was forfeiting a just title to a name which has been freely granted to many whom to equal, and even to excel, is but very stinted commendation.

In this case it appears that the usual comparison between poetry and painting entirely fails: the artist who takes an accurate likeness of individuals, or a faithful representation of scenery, may not rank so high in the public estimation as one who paints an historical event, or an heroic action; but he is nevertheless a painter, and his accuracy is so far from diminishing his reputation, that it procures for him in general both fame and emolument: nor is it perhaps with strict justice determined that the credit and reputation of those verses which strongly and faithfully delineate character and manners, should be lessened in the opinion of the public by the very accuracy which gives value and distinction to the productions of the pencil.

Nevertheless, it must be granted that the pretensions of any composition to be regarded as poetry will depend upon that definition of the poetic character which he who undertakes to determine the question has considered as decisive; and it is confessed also that one of great authority may be adopted, by which the verses now before the reader, and many others which have probably amused and delighted him, must be excluded: a definition like this will be found in the words which the greatest of poets, not divinely inspired, has given to the most noble and valiant Duke of Athens—

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth  
to heaven;  
And as Imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy  
nothing  
A local habitation, and a name.\*

\* *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act v, Scene 1.

Hence we observe the poet is one who, in the excursions of his fancy between heaven and earth, lights upon a kind of fairy-land, in which he places a creation of his own, where he embodies shapes, and gives action and adventure to his ideal offspring; taking captive the imagination of his readers, he elevates them above the grossness of actual being, into the soothing and pleasant atmosphere of supra-mundane existence: there he obtains for his visionary inhabitants the interest that engages a reader's attention without ruffling his feelings, and excites that moderate kind of sympathy which the realities of nature oftentimes fail to produce, either because they are so familiar and insignificant that they excite no determinate emotion, or are so harsh and powerful that the feelings excited are grating and distasteful.

Be it then granted that (as Duke Theseus observes) 'such tricks hath strong Imagination,' and that such poets 'are of imagination all compact;' let it be further conceded, that theirs is a higher and more dignified kind of composition, nay, the only kind that has pretensions to inspiration; still, that these poets should so entirely engross the title as to exclude those who address their productions to the plain sense and sober judgment of their readers, rather than to their fancy and imagination, I must repeat that I am unwilling to admit—because I conceive that, by granting such right of exclusion, a vast deal of what has been hitherto received as genuine poetry would no longer be entitled to that appellation.

All that kind of satire wherein character is skilfully delineated must (this criterion being allowed) no longer be esteemed as genuine poetry; and for the same reason many affecting narratives which are founded on real events, and borrow no aid whatever from the imagination of the writer, must likewise be rejected: a considerable part of the poems, as they have hitherto been denominated, of Chaucer, are of this naked and unveiled character: and there are in his Tales many pages of coarse, accurate, and minute, but very striking description. Many small poems in a subsequent age, of most impressive kind, are adapted and addressed to the common sense of the reader, and

prevail by the strong language of truth and nature: they amused our ancestors, and they continue to engage our interest, and excite our feelings, by the same powerful appeals to the heart and affections. In times less remote, Dryden has given us much of this poetry, in which the force of expression and accuracy of description have neither needed nor obtained assistance from the fancy of the writer; the characters in his Absalom and Achitophel are instances of this, and more especially those of Doeg and Og in the second part: these, with all their grossness, and almost offensive accuracy, are found to possess that strength and spirit which has preserved from utter annihilation the dead bodies of Tate, to whom they were inhumanly bound, happily with a fate the reverse of that caused by the cruelty of Mezentius; for there the living perished in the putrefaction of the dead, and here the dead are preserved by the vitality of the living. And, to bring forward one other example, it will be found that Pope himself has no small portion of this actuality of relation, this nudity of description, and poetry without an atmosphere; the lines beginning, 'In the worst inn's worst room,' are an example, and many others may be seen in his Satires, Imitations, and above all in his Dunciad: the frequent absence of those 'Sports of Fancy,' and 'Tricks of strong Imagination,' have been so much observed, that some have ventured to question whether even this writer were a poet; and though, as Dr. Johnson has remarked, it would be difficult to form a definition of one in which Pope should not be admitted, yet they who doubted his claim, had, it is likely, provided for his exclusion by forming that kind of character for their poet, in which this elegant versifier, for so he must be then named, should not be comprehended.

These things considered, an author will find comfort in his expulsion from the rank and society of poets, by reflecting that men much his superiors were likewise shut out, and more especially when he finds also that men not much his superiors are entitled to admission.

But in whatever degree I may venture to differ from any others in my notions of the qualifications and character of the true poet, I most cordially assent to their opinion who

assert that his principal exertions must be made to engage the attention of his readers; and further, I must allow that the effect of poetry should be to lift the mind from the painful realities of actual existence, from its every-day concerns, and its perpetually-occurring vexations, and to give it repose by substituting objects in their place which it may contemplate with some degree of interest and satisfaction: but what is there in all this, which may not be effected by a fair representation of existing character? nay, by a faithful delineation of those painful realities, those every-day concerns, and those perpetually-occurring vexations themselves, provided they be not (which is hardly to be supposed) the very concerns and distresses of the reader? for when it is admitted that they have no particular relation to him, but are the troubles and anxieties of other men, they excite and interest his feelings as the imaginary exploits, adventures, and perils of romance;—they soothe his mind, and keep his curiosity pleasantly awake; they appear to have enough of reality to engage his sympathy, but possess not interest sufficient to create painful sensations. Fiction itself, we know, and every work of fancy, must for a time have the effect of realities; nay, the very enchanters, spirits, and monsters of Ariosto and Spenser must be present in the mind of the reader while he is engaged by their operations, or they would be as the objects and incidents of a nursery tale to a rational understanding, altogether despised and neglected: in truth, I can but consider this pleasant effect upon the mind of a reader, as depending neither upon the events related (whether they be actual or imaginary), nor

upon the characters introduced (whether taken from life or fancy), but upon the manner in which the poem itself is conducted; let that be judiciously managed, and the occurrences actually copied from life will have the same happy effect as the inventions of a creative fancy;—while, on the other hand, the imaginary persons and incidents to which the poet has given ‘a local habitation, and a name,’ will make upon the concurring feelings of the reader the same impressions with those taken from truth and nature, because they will appear to be derived from that source, and therefore of necessity will have a similar effect.

Having thus far presumed to claim for the ensuing pages the rank and title of poetry, I attempt no more, nor venture to class or compare them with any other kinds of poetical composition; their place will doubtless be found for them.

A principal view and wish of the poet must be to engage the mind of his readers, as, failing in that point, he will scarcely succeed in any other: I therefore willingly confess that much of my time and assiduity has been devoted to this purpose; but, to the ambition of pleasing, no other sacrifices have, I trust, been made, than of my own labour and care. Nothing will be found that militates against the rules of propriety and good manners, nothing that offends against the more important precepts of morality and religion; and with this negative kind of merit, I commit my book to the judgment and taste of the reader—not being willing to provoke his vigilance by professions of accuracy, nor to solicit his indulgence by apologies for mistakes.



## TALE I. THE DUMB ORATORS ; OR, THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY

In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe—

Full of wise saws and modern instances.

*As You Like It*, Act ii, Scene 7.

Deep shame had struck me dumb.

*King John*, Act iv, Scene 2.

He gives the bastinado with his tongue,  
Our ears are cudgell'd.

*King John*, Act ii, Scene 1.

*Dick.* Let's kill all the lawyers ; . . .

*Cade.* Now show yourselves men : 'tis for  
liberty :

We will not leave one lord or gentleman.

*2 Henry VI*, Act iv, Scene 2.

And thus the whirligig of time brings in his  
revenges.

*Twelfth Night*, Act v, Scene last.

THAT all men would be cowards if they dare,  
Some men we know have courage to declare ;  
And this the life of many an hero shows,  
That like the tide, man's courage ebbs and  
flows :

With friends and gay companions round  
them, then

Men boldly speak and have the hearts of men ;  
Who, with opponents seated, miss the aid  
Of kind applauding looks, and grow afraid ;  
Like timid trav'lers in the night, they fear  
Th' assault of foes, when not a friend is near.

In contest mighty and of conquest proud  
Was Justice Bolt, impetuous, warm, and loud ;  
His fame, his prowess all the country knew,  
And disputants, with one so fierce, were few :  
He was a younger son, for law design'd,  
With dauntless look and persevering mind ;  
While yet a clerk, for disputation famed,  
No efforts tired him, and no conflicts tamed.

Scarcely he bade his master's desk adieu,  
When both his brothers from the world  
withdrew.

An ample fortune he from them possess'd,  
And was with saving care and prudence  
bless'd.

Now would he go and to the country give  
Example how an English 'squire should live ;  
How bounteous, yet how frugal man may be,  
By a well-order'd hospitality ;

He would the rights of all so well maintain  
That none should idle be, and none complain.

All this and more he purposed—and what  
man

Could do, he did to realize his plan :

But time convinced him that we cannot keep  
A breed of reasoners like a flock of sheep ;  
For they, so far from following as we lead,  
Make that a cause why they will not proceed.  
Man will not follow where a rule is shown,  
But loves to take a method of his own ;  
Explain the way with all your care and skill,  
This will he quit, if but to prove he will.—  
Yet had our Justice honour—and the crowd,  
Awed by his presence, their respect avowed.

In later years he found his heart incline,  
More than in youth, to gen'rous food and  
wine ;

But no indulgence check'd the powerful love  
He felt to teach, to argue, and reprove.

Meetings, or public calls, he never miss'd—  
To dictate often, always to assist.

Oft he the clergy join'd, and not a cause  
Pertain'd to them but he could quote the  
laws ;

He upon tithes and residence display'd  
A fund of knowledge for the hearer's aid ;  
And could on glebe and farming, wool and  
grain,

A long discourse, without a pause, maintain.

To his experience and his native sense  
He join'd a bold imperious eloquence ;  
The grave, stern look of men inform'd and  
wise,

A full command of feature, heart, and eyes,  
An awe-compelling frown, and fear-inspiring  
size.

When at the table, not a guest was seen  
With appetite so ling'ring, or so keen ;  
But when the outer man no more required,  
The inner waked, and he was man inspired.  
His subjects then were those, a subject true  
Presents in fairest form to public view ;  
Of Church and State, of Law, with mighty  
strength

Of words he spoke, in speech of mighty length.  
And now, into the vale of years declined,  
He hides too little of the monarch-mind :

He kindles anger by untimely jokes,  
And opposition by contempt provokes ;  
Mirth he suppresses by his awful frown,  
And humble spirits, by disdain, keeps down ;  
Blamed by the mild, approved by the severe,  
The prudent fly him, and the valiant fear.

For overbearing is his proud discourse,  
And overwhelming of his voice the force ;  
And overpowering is he when he shows  
What floats upon a mind that always over-  
flows.

This ready man at every meeting rose,  
Something to hint, determine, or propose ;  
And grew so fond of teaching, that he taught  
Those who instruction needed not or sought :  
Happy our hero, when he could excite  
Some thoughtless talker to the wordy fight :  
Let him a subject at his pleasure choose,  
Physic or Law, Religion or the Muse ;  
On all such themes he was prepared to shine,  
Physician, poet, lawyer, and divine.  
Hemm'd in by some tough argument, borne  
down

By press of language and the awful frown,  
In vain for mercy shall the culprit plead ;  
His crime is past, and sentence must proceed :  
Ah ! suffering man, have patience, bear thy  
woes—

For lo ! the clock—at ten the Justice goes.

This powerful man, on business or to please  
A curious taste, or weary grown of ease,  
On a long journey travell'd many a mile  
Westward, and halted midway in our isle ;  
Content to view a city large and fair,  
Though none had notice—what a man was  
there !

Silent two days, he then began to long  
Again to try a voice so loud and strong ;  
To give his favourite topics some new grace,  
And gain some glory in such distant place ;  
To reap some present pleasure, and to sow  
Seeds of fair fame, in after-time to grow :  
Here will men say, ' We heard, at such an hour,  
The best of speakers—wonderful his power.'

Inquiry made, he found that day would  
meet

A learned club, and in the very street :  
Knowledge to gain and give, was the design ;  
To speak, to hearken, to debate, and dine :  
This pleased our traveller, for he felt his force  
In either way, to eat or to discourse.

Nothing more easy than to gain access  
To men like these, with his polite address :

So he succeeded, and first look'd around,  
To view his objects and to take his ground ;  
And therefore silent chose awhile to sit,  
Then enter boldly by some lucky hit ;  
Some observation keen or stroke severe,  
To cause some wonder or excite some fear.

Now, dinner past, no longer he suppress'd  
His strong dislike to be a silent guest ;  
Subjects and words were now at his com-  
mand—

When disappointment frown'd on all he  
plann'd ;

For, hark !—he heard amazed, on every side,  
His church insulted and her priests belied ;  
The laws reviled, the ruling power abused,  
The land derided, and its foes excused :—  
He heard and ponder'd,—What, to men so  
vile,

Should be his language ? For his threat'ning  
style

They were too many ;—if his speech were  
meek,

They would despise such poor attempts to  
speak :

At other times with every word at will,  
He now sat lost, perplex'd, astonish'd,  
still.

Here were Socinians, Deists, and indeed  
All who, as foes to England's church, agreed ;  
But still with creeds unlike, and some without  
a creed :

Here, too, fierce friends of liberty he saw,  
Who own'd no prince and who obey no law ;  
There were Reformers of each different sort,  
Foes to the laws, the priesthood, and the  
court ;

Some on their favourite plans alone intent,  
Some purely angry and malevolent :

The rash were proud to blame their country's  
laws ;

The vain, to seem supporters of a cause ;  
One call'd for change that he would dread to  
see ;

Another sigh'd for Gallic liberty !  
And numbers joining with the forward crew,  
For no one reason—but that numbers do.

' How,' said the Justice, ' can this trouble  
rise,

This shame and pain, from creatures I de-  
spise ?'

And conscience answer'd—' The prevailing  
cause

Is thy delight in listening to applause ;

Here, thou art seated with a tribe, who spurn  
Thy favourite themes, and into laughter turn  
Thy fears and wishes ; silent and obscure,  
Thyself, shalt thou the long harangue endure ;  
And learn, by feeling, what it is to force  
On thy unwilling friends the long discourse :  
What though thy thoughts be just, and these,  
it seems,

Are traitors' projects, idiots' empty schemes ;  
Yet minds like bodies cramm'd, reject their  
food,

Nor will be forced and tortured for their good !

At length, a sharp, shrewd, sallow man  
arose,

And begg'd he briefly might his mind disclose ;  
' It was his duty, in these worst of times,  
T' inform the govern'd of their rulers' crimes : '  
This pleasant subject to attend, they each  
Prepared to listen, and forbore to teach.

Then voluble and fierce the wordy man  
Through a long chain of favourite horrors  
ran :—

First, of the church, from whose enslaving  
power

He was deliver'd, and he bless'd the hour ;  
' Bishops and deans, and prebendaries all,'  
He said, ' were cattle fatt'ning in the stall ;  
Slothful and porsy, insolent and mean,  
Were every bishop, prebendary, dean,  
And wealthy rector : curates, poorly paid,  
Were only dull ;—he would not them up-  
braid.'

From priests he turn'd to canons, creeds,  
and prayers,

Rubrics and rules, and all our church affairs ;  
Churches themselves, desk, pulpit, altar, all  
The Justice revered—and pronounced  
their fall.

Then from religion Hammond turn'd his  
view,

To give our rulers the correction due ;  
Not one wise action had these triflers plann'd ;  
There was, it seem'd, no wisdom in the land ;  
Save in this patriot tribe, who meet at times  
To show the statesman's errors and his crimes.

Now here was Justice Bolt compell'd to  
sit,

To hear the deist's scorn, the rebel's wit ;  
The fact mis-stated, the envenom'd lie,  
And staring, spell-bound, made not one reply.

Then were our laws abused—and with the  
laws,

All who prepare, defend, or judge a cause :

' We have no lawyer whom a man can trust,'  
Proceeded Hammond—' if the laws were just ;  
But they are evil ; 'tis the savage state  
Is only good, and ours sophisticate !

See ! the free creatures in their woods and  
plains,

Where without laws each happy monarch  
reigns,

King of himself—while we a number dread,  
By slaves commanded and by dunces led ;  
Oh, let the name with either state agree—  
Savage our own we'll name, and civil theirs  
shall be.'

The silent Justice still astonish'd sate,  
And wonder'd much whom he was gazing at ;  
Twice he essay'd to speak—but in a cough  
The faint, indignant, dying speech went off :  
' But who is this ? ' thought he—' a daemon  
vile,

With wicked meaning and a vulgar style :  
Hammond they call him ; they can give the  
name

Of man to devils.—Why am I so tame ?  
Why crush I not the viper ? '—Fear replied,  
' Watch him awhile, and let his strength be  
tried ;

He will be foil'd, if man ; but if his aid  
Be from beneath, 'tis well to be afraid.'

' We are call'd free ! ' said Hammond—  
' doleful times

When rulers add their insult to their crimes ;  
For should our scorn expose each powerful  
vice,

It would be libel, and we pay the price.'

Thus with licentious words the man went  
on,

Proving that liberty of speech was gone ;  
That all wereslaves—nor had we better chance  
For better times than as allies to France.

Loud groan'd the stranger—Why, he must  
relate ;

And own'd, ' In sorrow for his country's fate ; '  
' Nay, she were safe,' the ready man replied,  
' Might patriots rule her, and could reasoners  
guide ;

When all to vote, to speak, to teach, are free,  
Whate'er their creeds or their opinions be ;  
When books of statutes are consumed in  
flames,

And courts and copyholds are empty names ;  
Then will be times of joy—but ere they come,  
Havock, and war, and blood must be our  
doom.'

The man here paused—then loudly for reform

He call'd, and hail'd the prospect of the storm;  
The wholesome blast, the fertilizing flood—  
Peace gain'd by tumult, plenty bought with blood :

Sharp means, he own'd ; but when the land's disease

Asks cure complete, no med'cines are like these.

Our Justice now, more led by fear than rage,  
Saw it in vain with madness to engage ;  
With imps of darkness no man seeks to fight,  
Knives to instruct, or set deceivers right :  
Then as the daring speech denounced these woes,

Sick at the soul, the grieving guest arose ;  
Quick on the board his ready cash he threw,  
And from the daemons to his closet flew :

There when secured, he pray'd with earnest zeal,

That all they wish'd these patriot-souls might feel ;

' Let them to France, their darling country, haste,

And all the comforts of a Frenchman taste ;  
Let them his safety, freedom, pleasure know,  
Feel all their rulers on the land bestow ;  
And be at length dismiss'd by one unerring blow ;

Not hack'd and hew'd by one afraid to strike,  
But shorn by that which shears all men alike ;  
Nor, as in Britain, let them curse delay  
Of law, but borne without a form away—  
Suspected, tried, condemn'd, and carted in a day ;

Oh ! let them taste what they so much approve,

These strong fierce freedoms of the land they love.\*

Home came our hero, to forget no more  
The fear he felt and ever must deplore :  
For though he quickly join'd his friends again,  
And could with decent force his themes maintain,

\* The reader will perceive in these and the preceding verses allusions to the state of France, as that country was circumstanced some years since, rather than as it appears to be in the present date : several years elapsing between the alarm of the loyal magistrate on the occasion now related, and a subsequent event that farther illustrates the remark with which the narrative commences.

Still it occur'd that, in a luckless time,  
He fail'd to fight with heresy and crime ;  
It was observed his words were not so strong,  
His tones so powerful, his harangues so long,  
As in old times—for he would often drop  
The lofty look, and of a sudden stop ;  
When conscience whisper'd, that he once was still,

And let the wicked triumph at their will ;  
And therefore now, when not a foe was near,  
He had no right so valiant to appear.

Some years had pass'd, and he perceived his fears

Yield to the spirit of his earlier years—  
When at a meeting, with his friends beside,  
He saw an object that awak'd his pride ;  
His shame, wrath, vengeance, indignation—all

Man's harsher feelings did that sight recall.

For lo ! beneath him fix'd, our man of law  
That lawless man the foe of order saw ;  
Once fear'd, now scorn'd ; once dreaded,  
now abhorr'd ;

A wordy man, and evil every word :  
Again he gaz'd—' It is,' said he, ' the same ;  
Caught and secure : his master owes him shame : '

So thought our hero, who each instant found  
His courage rising, from the numbers round.

As when a felon has escaped and fled,  
So long, that law conceives the culprit dead ;  
And back recall'd her myrmidons, intent  
On some new game, and with a stronger scent,  
Till she beholds him in a place, where none  
Could have conceived the culprit would have gone ;

There he sits upright in his seat, secure,  
As one whose conscience is correct and pure ;  
This rouses anger for the old offence,  
And scorn for all such seeming and pretence ;  
So on this Hammond look'd our hero bold,  
Rememb'ring well that vile offence of old ;  
And now he saw the rebel dared t' intrude  
Among the pure, the loyal, and the good ;  
The crime provoked his wrath, the folly  
stirr'd his blood :

Nor wonder was it if so strange a sight  
Caused joy with vengeance, terror with delight ;

Terror like this a tiger might create,  
A joy like that to see his captive state,  
At once to know his force and then decree  
his fate.

Hammond, much praised by numerous friends, was come  
To read his lectures, so admired at home ;  
Historic lectures, where he loved to mix  
His free plain hints on modern politics :  
Here, he had heard, that numbers had design,  
Their business finish'd, to sit down and dine ;  
This gave him pleasure, for he judged it right  
To show by day, that he could speak at night.  
Rash the design—for he perceived, too late,  
Not one approving friend beside him sate ;  
The greater number, whom he traced around,  
Were men in black, and he conceived they frown'd.

‘ I will not speak,’ he thought ; ‘ no pearls of mine

Shall be presented to this herd of swine ; ’  
Not this avail'd him, when he cast his eye  
On Justice Bolt ; he could not fight, nor fly :  
He saw a man to whom he gave the pain,  
Which now he felt must be return'd again ;  
His conscience told him with what keen delight

He, at that time, enjoy'd a stranger's fright ;  
That stranger now befriended—he alone,  
For all his insult, friendless, to atone ;  
Now he could feel it cruel that a heart  
Should be distress'd, and none to take its part ;  
‘ Though one by one,’ said Pride, ‘ I would defy  
Much greater men, yet meeting every eye,  
I do confess a fear—but he will pass me by.’

Vain hope ! the Justice saw the foe's distress,

With exultation he could not suppress ;  
He felt the fish was hook'd—and so forbore,  
In playful spite, to draw it to the shore.  
Hammond look'd round again ; but none were near,

With friendly smile, to still his growing fear ;  
But all above him seem'd a solemn row  
Of priests and deacons, so they seem'd below ;  
He wonder'd who his right-hand man might be—

Vicar of Holt cum Uppingham was he ;  
And who the man of that dark frown possess'd—

Rector of Bradley and of Barton-west ;  
‘ A pluralist,’ he growl'd—but check'd the word,

That warfare might not, by his zeal, be stirr'd.  
But now began the man above to show  
Fierce looks and threat'nings to the man below :

Who had some thoughts his peace by flight to seek—

But how then lecture, if he dared not speak !—

Now as the Justice for the war prepared,  
He seem'd just then to question if he dared ;  
‘ He may resist, although his power be small,  
And growing desperate may defy us all ;  
One dog attack, and he prepares for flight—  
Resist another, and he strives to bite ;  
Nor can I say, if this rebellious cur  
Will fly for safety, or will scorn to stir.’  
Alarm'd by this, he lash'd his soul to rage,  
Burn'd with strong shame, and hurried to engage.

As a male turkey straggling on the green,  
When by fierce harriers, terriers, mongrels seen,

He feels the insult of the noisy train,  
And skulks aside, though moved by much disdain ;

But when that turkey, at his own barn-door,  
Sees one poor straying puppy and no more,  
(A foolish puppy who had left the pack,  
Thoughtless what foe was threat'ning at his back,)

He moves about, as ship prepared to sail,  
He hoists his proud rotundity of tail,  
The half-seal'd eyes and changeful neck he shows,

Where, in its quick'ning colours, vengeance glows ;

From red to blue the pendant wattles turn,  
Blue mix'd with red, as matches when they burn ;

And thus th' intruding snarler to oppose,  
Urged by endearing wrath, he gobbling goes.

So look'd our hero in his wrath, his cheeks  
Flush'd with fresh fires and glow'd in tingling streaks ;

His breath by passion's force awhile restrain'd,  
Like a stopp'd current, greater force regain'd ;  
So spoke, so look'd he, every eye and ear  
Were fix'd to view him, or were turn'd to hear.

‘ My friends, you know me, you can witness all,

How, urged by passion, I restrain my gall ;  
And every motive to revenge withstand—  
Save when I hear abused my native land.

‘ Is it not known, agreed, confirm'd, confess'd,  
That of all people, we are govern'd best ?  
We have the force of monarchies ; are free,  
As the most proud republicans can be ;

And have those prudent counsels that arise  
In grave and cautious aristocracies ;  
And live there those, in such all-glorious state,  
Traitors protected in the land they hate ?  
Rebels, still warring with the laws that give  
To them subsistence ?—Yes, such wretches  
live.

‘Ours is a church reform’d, and now no  
more  
Is aught for man to mend or to restore ;  
’Tis pure in doctrines, ’tis correct in creeds,  
Has nought redundant, and it nothing needs ;  
No evil is therein—no wrinkle, spot,  
Stain, blame, or blemish :—I affirm there’s  
not.

‘All this you know—now mark what once  
befell,  
With grief I bore it, and with shame I tell ;  
I was entrapp’d—yes, so it came to pass,  
Mid heathen rebels, a tumultuous class ;  
Each to his country bore a hellish mind,  
Each like his neighbour was of cursed kind ;  
The land that nursed them they blasphemed ;  
the laws,  
Their sovereign’s glory, and their country’s  
cause ;  
And who their mouth, their master-fiend,  
and who  
Rebellion’s oracle ?—You, caitiff, you !’

He spoke, and standing stretch’d his  
mighty arm,  
And fix’d the man of words, as by a charm.  
‘How raved that railer ! Sure some hellish  
power  
Restrain’d my tongue in that delirious hour,  
Or I had hurl’d the shame and vengeance due  
On him, the guide of that infuriate crew ;  
But to my eyes such dreadful looks appear’d,  
Such mingled yell of lying words I heard,  
That I conceived around were daemons all,  
And till I fled the house, I fear’d its fall.

‘Oh ! could our country from our coasts  
expel  
Such foes ! to nourish those who wish her  
well :

This her mild laws forbid, but we may still  
From us eject them by our sovereign will ;  
This let us do.’—He said, and then began  
A gentler feeling for the silent man ;

Ev’n in our hero’s mighty soul arose  
A touch of pity for experienced woes ;  
But this was transient, and with angry eye  
He sternly look’d, and paused for a reply.

’Twas then the man of many words would  
speak—

But, in his trial, had them all to seek :  
To find a friend he look’d the circle round,  
But joy or scorn in every feature found ;  
He sipp’d his wine, but in those times of dread  
Wine only adds confusion to the head ;  
In doubt he reason’d with himself—‘And how  
Harangue at night, if I be silent now ?’  
From pride and praise received, he sought to  
draw

Courage to speak, but still remain’d the awe ;  
One moment rose he with a forced disdain,  
And then abash’d, sunk sadly down again ;  
While in our hero’s glance he seem’d to read,  
‘Slave and insurgent ! what hast thou to  
plead ?’—

By desperation urged, he now began :  
‘I seek no favour—I—the Rights of Man !  
Claim ; and I—nay !—but give me leave—  
and I

Insist—a man—that is—and in reply,  
I speak.’—Alas ! each new attempt was  
vain :

Confused he stood, he sate, he rose again ;  
At length he growl’d defiance, sought the door,  
Cursed the whole synod, and was seen no  
more.

‘Laud we,’ said Justice Bolt, ‘the Powers  
above ;  
Thus could our speech the sturdiest foe  
remove.’

Exulting now he gain’d new strength of fame,  
And lost all feelings of defeat and shame.

‘He dared not strive, you witness’d—  
dared not lift

His voice, nor drive at his accursed drift :  
So all shall tremble, wretches who oppose  
Our church or state—thus be it to our foes.’

He spoke, and, seated with his former air,  
Look’d his full self, and fill’d his ample chair ;  
Took one full bumper to each favourite cause,  
And dwelt all night on politics and laws,  
With high applauding voice, that gain’d him  
high applause.

## TALE II. THE PARTING HOUR

I did not take my leave of him, but had  
Most pretty things to say : ere I could tell him  
How I would think on him, at certain hours,  
Such thoughts and such ; . . . or ere I could  
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set  
Betwixt two charming words—comes in my  
father—

*Cymbeline*, Act i, Scene 3.

O, grief hath changed me since you saw me last,  
And careful hours with Time's deformed hand  
Have written strange defeatures in my face.

*Comedy of Errors*, Act v, Scene 1.

Oh ! if thou be'st the same Aegeon, speak,  
And speak unto the same Aemilia.

*Comedy of Errors*, Act v, Scene 1.

I ran it through, ev'n from my boyish days  
To the very moment that he bade me tell it,  
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,  
Of moving accidents, by flood, and field ; . . .  
Of being taken by the insolent foe  
And sold to slavery.

*Othello*, Act i, Scene 3.

An old man, broken with the storms of state,  
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye ;  
Give him a little earth for charity.

*Henry VIII*, Act iv, Scene 2.

MINUTELY trace man's life ; year after year,  
Through all his days let all his deeds appear,  
And then, though some may in that life be  
strange,

Yet there appears no vast nor sudden change :  
The links that bind those various deeds are  
seen,

And no mysterious void is left between.

But let these binding links be all destroy'd,  
All that through years he suffer'd or enjoy'd ;  
Let that vast gap be made, and then behold—  
This was the youth, and he is thus when old ;  
Then we at once the work of Time survey,  
And in an instant see a life's decay ;  
Pain mix'd with pity in our bosoms rise,  
And sorrow takes new sadness from surprise.

Beneath yon tree, observe an ancient pair—  
A sleeping man ; a woman in her chair,  
Watching his looks with kind and pensive air ;  
No wife, nor sister she, nor is the name  
Nor kindred of this friendly pair the same ;  
Yet so allied are they, that few can feel  
Her constant, warm, unwearied, anxious zeal ;

Their years and woes, although they long  
have loved,

Keep their good name and conduct unre-  
proved ;

Thus life's small comforts they together share,  
And while life lingers for the grave prepare.

No other subjects on their spirits press,  
Nor gain such int'rest as the past distress  
Grievous events that from the mem'ry drive  
Life's common cares, and those alone survive,  
Mix with each thought, in every action share,  
Darken each dream, and blend with every  
prayer.

To David Booth, his fourth and last-born  
boy,

Allen his name, was more than common joy ;  
And as the child grew up, there seem'd in  
him

A more than common life in every limb ;  
A strong and handsome stripling he became,  
And the gay spirit answer'd to the frame ;  
A lighter, happier lad was never seen,  
For ever easy, cheerful, or serene ;  
His early love he fix'd upon a fair  
And gentle maid—they were a handsome pair.

They at an infant-school together play'd,  
Where the foundation of their love was laid ;  
The boyish champion would his choice attend  
In every sport, in every fray defend.

As prospects open'd and as life advanced,  
They walk'd together, they together danced ;  
On all occasions, from their early years,  
They mix'd their joys and sorrows, hopes and  
fears ;

Each heart was anxious, till it could impart  
Its daily feelings to its kindred heart ;  
As years increased, unnumber'd petty wars  
Broke out between them ; jealousies and jars ;  
Causeless indeed, and follow'd by a peace,  
That gave to love—growth, vigour, and  
increase.

Whilst yet a boy, when other minds are void,  
Domestic thoughts young Allen's hours  
employ'd ;

Judith in gaining hearts had no concern,  
Rather intent the matron's part to learn ;  
Thus early prudent and sedate they grew,  
While lovers, thoughtful—and though chil-  
dren, true.

To either parents not a day appear'd,  
When with this love they might have inter-  
fered :

Childish at first, they cared not to restrain ;  
And strong at last, they saw restriction vain ;  
Nor knew they when that passion to reprove—  
Now idle fondness, now resistless love.

So while the waters rise, the children tread  
On the broad estuary's sandy bed ;  
But soon the channel fills, from side to side  
Comes danger rolling with the deep'ning tide ;  
Yet none who saw the rapid current flow  
Could the first instant of that danger know.

The lovers waited till the time should come  
When they together could possess a home :  
In either house were men and maids unwed,  
Hopes to be soothed, and tempers to be led.  
Then Allen's mother of his favourite maid  
Spoke from the feelings of a mind afraid :  
' Dress and amusements were her sole employ,'  
She said—' entangling her deluded boy ;'  
And yet, in truth, a mother's jealous love  
Had much imagined and could little prove ;  
Judith had beauty—and if vain, was kind,  
Discreet, and mild, and had a serious mind.

Dull was their prospect—when the lovers  
met,

They said, we must not—dare not venture yet :  
' Oh ! could I labour for thee,' Allen cried,  
Why should our friends be thus dissatisfied ?  
On my own arm I could depend, but they  
Still urge obedience—must I yet obey ?'  
Poor Judith felt the grief, but grieving begg'd  
delay.

At length a prospect came that seem'd to  
smile,

And faintly woo them, from a Western Isle ;  
A kinsman there a widow's hand had gain'd,  
' Was old, was rich, and childless yet remain'd ;  
Would some young Booth to his affairs attend,  
And wait awhile, he might expect a friend.'  
The elder brothers, who were not in love,  
Fear'd the false seas, unwilling to remove ;  
But the young Allen, an enamour'd boy,  
Eager an independence to enjoy,  
Would through all perils seek it,—by the  
sea,—

Through labour, danger, pain, or slavery.  
The faithful Judith his design approved,  
For both were sanguine, they were young  
and loved.

The mother's slow consent was then obtain'd ;  
The time arrived, to part alone remain'd :

All things prepared, on the expected day  
Was seen the vessel anchor'd in the bay.  
From her would seamen in the evening come,  
To take th' advent'rous Allen from his home ;  
With his own friends the final day he pass'd,  
And every painful hour, except the last.  
The grieving father urged the cheerful glass,  
To make the moments with less sorrow pass ;  
Intent the mother look'd upon her son,  
And wish'd th' assent withdrawn, the deed  
undone ;

The younger sister, as he took his way,  
Hung on his coat, and begg'd for more delay,  
But his own Judith call'd him to the shore,  
Whom he must meet, for they might meet no  
more ;—

And there he found her—faithful, mournful,  
true,

Weeping and waiting for a last adieu !  
The ebbing tide had left the sand, and there  
Moved with slow steps the melancholy pair :  
Sweet were the painful moments—but how  
sweet,

And without pain, when they again should  
meet !

Now either spoke, as hope and fear impress'd  
Each their alternate triumph in the breast.

Distance alarm'd the maid—she cried,  
' 'Tis far !'

And danger too—' it is a time of war :  
Then in those countries are diseases strange,  
And women gay, and men are prone to  
change ;

What then may happen in a year, when things  
Of vast importance every moment brings !  
But hark ! an oar !' she cried, yet none  
appear'd—

'Twas love's mistake, who fancied what it  
feard ;

And she continued—' Do, my Allen, keep  
Thy heart from evil, let thy passions sleep ;  
Believe it good, nay glorious, to prevail,  
And stand in safety where so many fail ;  
And do not, Allen, or for shame, or pride,  
Thy faith abjure, or thy profession hide ;  
Can I believe *his* love will lasting prove,  
Who has no rev'rence for the God I love ?  
I know thee well ! how good thou art and  
kind ;

But strong the passions that invade thy  
mind.—

Now, what to me hath Allen to commend ?'—  
' Upon my mother,' said the youth, ' attend ;



Forget her spleen, and in my place appear ;  
Her love to me will make my Judith dear :  
Oft I shall think, (such comfort lovers seek),  
Who speaks of me, and fancy what they speak ;  
Then write on all occasions, always dwell  
On hope's fair prospects, and be kind and well,  
And ever choose the fondest, tenderest style.  
She answer'd, ' No, ' but answer'd with a smile.

' And now, my Judith, at so sad a time,  
Forgive my fear, and call it not my crime ;  
When with our youthful neighbours 'tis thy chance

To meet in walks, the visit or the dance,  
When every lad would on my lass attend,  
Choose not a smooth designer for a friend ;  
That fawning Philip !—nay, be not severe,  
A rival's hope must cause a lover's fear.'

Displeased she felt, and might in her reply  
Have mix'd some anger, but the boat was nigh,  
Now truly heard !—it soon was full in sight ;—  
Now the sad farewell, and the long good-night ;  
For, see !—his friends come hast'ning to the beach,

And now the gunwale is within the reach ;  
' Adieu !—farewell !—remember ! '—and what more

Affection taught, was utter'd from the shore !  
But Judith left them with a heavy heart,  
Took a last view, and went to weep apart !  
And now his friends went slowly from the place,  
Where she stood still, the dashing oar to trace,  
Till all were silent !—for the youth she pray'd,  
And softly then return'd the weeping maid.

They parted, thus by hope and fortune led,  
And Judith's hours in pensive pleasure fled ;  
But when return'd the youth ?—the youth no more

Return'd exulting to his native shore ;  
But forty years were past, and then there came

A worn-out man with wither'd limbs and lame,  
His mind oppress'd with woes, and bent with age his frame :

Yes ! old and grieved, and trembling with decay,

Was Allen landing in his native bay,  
Willing his breathless form should blend with kindred clay.

In an autumnal eve he left the beach,  
In such an eve he chanced the port to reach :  
He was alone ; he press'd the very place  
Of the sad parting, of the last embrace :

There stood his parents, there retired the maid,

So fond, so tender, and so much afraid ;  
And on that spot, through many a year, his mind

Turn'd mournful back, half sinking, half resign'd.

No one was present ; of its crew bereft,  
A single boat was in the billows left ;  
Sent from some anchor'd vessel in the bay,  
At the returning tide to sail away :  
O'er the black stern the moonlight softly play'd,

The loosen'd foresail flapping in the shade ;  
All silent else on shore ; but from the town  
A drowsy peal of distant bells came down :  
From the tall houses here and there, a light  
Served some confused remembrance to excite :  
' There, ' he observed, and new emotions felt,  
' Was my first home—and yonder Judith dwelt ;

Dead ! dead are all ! I long—I fear to know, '   
He said, and walk'd impatient, and yet slow.

Sudden there broke upon his grief a noise  
Of merry tumult and of vulgar joys :  
Seamen returning to their ship, were come,  
With idle numbers straying from their home ;  
Allen among them mix'd, and in the old  
Strove some familiar features to behold ;  
While fancy aided memory :—' Man ! what cheer ? '

A sailor cried ; ' Art thou at anchor here ? '   
Faintly he answer'd, and then tried to trace  
Some youthful features in some aged face :  
A swarthy matron he beheld, and thought  
She might unfold the very truths he sought :  
Confused and trembling, he the dame address'd :

' The Booths ! yet live they ? ' pausing and oppress'd ;

Then spake again :—' Is there no ancient man,  
David his name ?—assist me, if you can.—  
Flemmings there were—and Judith, doth she live ? '

The woman gazed, nor could an answer give  
Yet wond'ring stood, and all were silent by,  
Feeling a strange and solemn sympathy.  
The woman musing said—' She knew full well

Where the old people came at last to dwell ;  
They had a married daughter and a son,  
But they were dead, and now remain'd not one.'

'Yes,' said an elder, who had paused intent  
On days long past, 'there was a sad event;—  
One of these Booths—it was my mother's  
tale—

Here left his lass, I know not where to sail;  
She saw their parting, and observed the pain;  
But never came th' unhappy man again:  
The ship was captured '—Allen meekly said,  
'And what became of the forsaken maid?'  
The woman answer'd: 'I remember now,  
She used to tell the lasses of her vow,  
And of her lover's loss, and I have seen  
The gayest hearts grow sad where she has  
been;

Yet in her grief she married, and was made  
Slave to a wretch, whom meekly she obey'd  
And early buried—but I know no more.  
And hark! our friends are hast'ning to the  
shore.'

Allen soon found a lodging in the town,  
And walk'd a man unnoticed up and down.  
This house, and this, he knew, and thought  
a face

He sometimes could among a number trace:  
Of names remember'd there remain'd a few,  
But of no favourites, and the rest were new;  
A merchant's wealth, when Allen went to sea,  
Was reckon'd boundless.—Could believing be?  
Or lived his son? for one he had, the heir  
To a vast business, and a fortune fair.  
No! but that their's poor widow, from her shed,  
With crutches went to take her dole of bread:  
There was a friend whom he had left a boy,  
With hope to sail the master of a hoy;  
Him, after many a stormy day, he found  
With his great wish, his life's whole purpose,  
crown'd.

This boy's proud captain look'd in Allen's  
face,—

'Yours is, my friend,' said he 'a woful case;  
We cannot all succeed; I now command  
The Betsy sloop, and am not much at land;  
But when we meet, you shall your story tell  
Of foreign parts—I bid you now farewell!'

Allen so long had left his native shore,  
He saw but few whom he had seen before;  
The older people, as they met him, cast  
A pitying look, oft speaking as they pass'd—  
'The man is Allen Booth, and it appears  
He dwelt among us in his early years;  
We see the name engraved upon the stones,  
Where this poor wanderer means to lay his  
bones.'

Thus where he lived and loved—unhappy  
change!—

He seems a stranger, and finds all are strange

But now a widow, in a village near,  
Chanced of the melancholy man to hear;  
Old as she was, to Judith's bosom came  
Some strong emotions at the well-known  
name;

He was her much-loved Allen, she had stay'd  
Ten troubled years, a sad afflicted maid;  
Then was she wedded, of his death assured,  
And much of mis'ry in her lot endured;  
Her husband died; her children sought their  
bread

In various places, and to her were dead.

The once fond lovers met; not grief nor age,  
Sickness or pain, their hearts could disengage:  
Each had immediate confidence; a friend  
Both now beheld, on whom they might depend:  
'Now is there one to whom I can express  
My nature's weakness and my soul's distress.'  
Allen look'd up, and with impatient heart—  
'Let me not lose thee—never let us part:  
So Heaven this comfort to my sufferings give,  
It is not all distress to think and live.'

Thus Allen spoke—for time had not removed  
The charms attach'd to one so fondly loved;  
Who with more health, the mistress of their  
cot,

Labours to soothe the evils of his lot.

To her, to her alone, his various fate,  
At various times, 'tis comfort to relate;  
And yet his sorrow—she too loves to hear  
What wrings her bosom, and compels the  
tear.

First he related how he left the shore,  
Alarm'd with fears that they should meet no  
more:

Then, ere the ship had reach'd her purposed  
course,

They met and yielded to the Spanish force;  
Then 'cross th' Atlantic seas they bore their  
prey,

Who grieving landed from their sultry bay;  
And marching many a burning league, he  
found

Himself a slave upon a miner's ground:  
There a good priest his native language spoke,  
And gave some ease to his tormenting yoke;  
Kindly advanced him in his master's grace,  
And he was station'd in an easier place:  
There, hopeless ever to escape the land,  
He to a Spanish maiden gave his hand;

In cottage shelter'd from the blaze of day  
He saw his happy infants round him play ;  
Where summer shadows, made by lofty trees,  
Waved o'er his seat, and soothed his reveries ;  
E'en then he thought of England, nor could  
sigh,

But his fond Isabel demanded, ' Why ? '  
Grieved by the story, she the sigh repaid,  
And wept in pity for the English maid :  
Thus twenty years were pass'd, and pass'd  
his views

Of further bliss, for he had wealth to lose :  
His friend now dead, some foe had dared to  
paint

' His faith as tainted : he his spouse would  
taint ;

Make all his children infidels, and found  
An English heresy on Christian ground.'

' Whilst I was poor,' said Allen, ' none  
would care

What my poor notions of religion were ;  
None ask'd me whom I worshipp'd, how I  
pray'd,

If due obedience to the laws were paid :  
My good adviser taught me to be still,  
Nor to make converts had I power or will.  
I preach'd no foreign doctrine to my wife,  
And never mention'd Luther in my life ;  
I, all they said, say what they would, allow'd,  
And when the fathers bade me bow, I bow'd,  
Their forms I follow'd, whether well or sick,  
And was a most obedient Catholic.

But I had money, and these pastors found  
My notions vague, heretical, unsound :  
A wicked book they seized ; the very Turk  
Could not have read a more pernicious work ;  
To me pernicious, who if it were good  
Or evil question'd not, nor understood :  
Oh ! had I little but the book possess'd,  
I might have read it, and enjoy'd my rest.'

Alas ! poor Allen, through his wealth was  
seen

Crimes that by poverty conceal'd had been :  
Faults that in dusty pictures rest unknown  
Are in an instant through the varnish shown.

He told their cruel mercy ; how at last,  
In Christian kindness for the merits past,  
They spared his forfeit life, but bade him fly,  
Or for his crime and contumacy die ;  
Fly from all scenes, all objects of delight :  
His wife, his children, weeping in his sight,  
All urging him to flee, he fled, and cursed his  
flight.

He next related how he found a way,  
Guideless and grieving, to Campeachy Bay :  
There in the woods he wrought, and there,  
among

Somelab'ringseamen, heard his native tongue :  
The sound, one moment, broke upon his pain  
With joyful force ; he longed to hear again.  
Again he heard ; he seized an offer'd hand,  
' And when beheld you last our native land ? '  
He cry'd, ' and in what county ? quickly  
say '—

Theseamen answer'd—strangers all were they ;  
One only at his native port had been ;  
He, landing once, the quay and church had  
seen,  
For that esteem'd ; but nothing more he  
knew.

Still more to know, would Allen join the crew,  
Sail where they sail'd, and, many a peril past,  
They at his kinsman's isle their anchor cast ;  
But him they found not, nor could one relate  
Aught of his will, his wish, or his estate.  
This grieved not Allen ; then again he sail'd  
For England's coast, again his fate prevail'd :  
War raged, and he, an active man and strong,  
Was soon impress'd, and served his country  
long.

By various shores he pass'd, on various seas,  
Never so happy as when void of ease.—  
And then he told how in a calm distress'd,  
Day after day his soul was sick of rest ;  
When, as a log upon the deep they stood,  
Then roved his spirit to the inland wood ;  
Till, while awake, he dream'd, that on the  
seas

Were his loved home, the hill, the stream, the  
trees :

He gazed, he pointed to the scenes :—' There  
stand

My wife, my children, 'tis my lovely land ;  
See ! there my dwelling—oh ! delicious scene  
Of my best life—unhand me—are ye men ? '

And thus the frenzy ruled him, till the wind  
Brush'd the fond pictures from the stagnant  
mind

He told of bloody fights, and how at length  
The rage of battle gave his spirits strength :  
'Twas in the Indian seas his limb he lost,  
And he was left half-dead upon the coast ;  
But living gain'd, 'mid rich aspiring men,  
A fair subsistence by his ready pen.

' Thus,' he continued, ' pass'd unvaried years,  
Without events producing hopes or fears.'

Augmented pay procured him decent wealth,  
But years advancing undermined his health;  
Then oft-times in delightful dream he flew  
To England's shore, and scenes his childhood  
knew:

He saw his parents, saw his fav'rite maid,  
No feature wrinkled, not a charm decay'd;  
And thus excited, in his bosom rose  
A wish so strong, it baffled his repose;  
Anxious he felt on English earth to lie;  
To view his native soil, and there to die.

He then described the gloom, the dread he  
found,

When first he landed on the chosen ground,  
Where undefined was all he hoped and fear'd,  
And how confused and troubled all appear'd;  
His thoughts in past and present scenes  
employ'd,

All views in future blighted and destroy'd:  
His were a medley of bewild'ring themes,  
Sad as realities, and wild as dreams.

Here his relation closes, but his mind  
Flies back again some resting-place to find;  
Thus silent, musing through the day, he sees  
His children sporting by those lofty trees,  
Their mother singing in the shady scene,  
Where the fresh springs burst o'er the lively  
green;—

So strong his eager fancy, he affrights  
The faithful widow by its powerful flights;  
For what disturbs him he aloud will tell,  
And cry—'Tis she, my wife! my Isabel!  
Where are my children?'—Judith grieves to  
hear

How the soul works in sorrows so severe;

Assiduous all his wishes to attend,  
Deprived of much, he yet may boast a friend;  
Watch'd by her care, in sleep, his spirit takes  
Its flight, and watchful finds her when he  
wakes.

'Tis now her office; her attention see!  
While her friend sleeps beneath that shading  
tree,

Careful she guards him from the glowing heat,  
And pensive muses at her Allen's feet.

And where is he? Ah! doubtless in those  
scenes

Of his best days, amid the vivid greens,  
Fresh with unnumber'd rills, where ev'ry gale  
Breathes the rich fragrance of the neighb'ring  
vale;

Smiles not his wife, and listens as there comes  
The night bird's music from the thick'ning  
glooms?

And as he sits with all these treasures nigh,  
Blaze not with fairy light the phosphor-fly,  
When like a sparkling gem it wheels illumined  
by?

This is the joy that now so plainly speaks  
In the warm transient flushing of his cheeks;  
For he is list'ning to the fancied noise  
Of his own children, eager in their joys:  
All this he feels, a dream's delusive bliss  
Gives the expression, and the glow like this.  
And now his Judith lays her knitting by,  
These strong emotions in her friend to spy;  
For she can fully of their nature deem—  
But see! he breaks the long-protracted theme,  
And wakes and cries—'My God! 'twas but  
a dream.'

### TALE III. THE GENTLEMAN FARMER

Pause there, . . .  
And weigh thy value with an even hand;  
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,  
Thou dost deserve enough.

*Merchant of Venice*, Act ii, Scene 7.

Because I will not do them the wrong to  
mistrust any, I will do myself the right to  
trust none; and the fine is (for the which I  
may go the finer), I will live a bachelor.

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act i, Scene 1.

Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.

*Macbeth*, Act v, Scene 3.

His promises were, as he then was, mighty;  
But his performance, as he is now, nothing.

*Henry VIII*, Act iv, Scene 2.

GWYN was a farmer, whom the farmers all,  
Who dwell around, the Gentleman would  
call;

Whether in pure humility or pride,  
They only knew, and they would not decide.

Far different he from that dull plodding  
tribe,

Whom it was his amusement to describe;

Creatures no more enliven'd than a clod,  
But treading still as their dull fathers trod;  
Who lived in times when not a man had seen  
Corn sown by drill, or thresh'd by a machine:  
He was of those whose skill assigns the prize  
For creatures fed in pens, and stalls, and sties;  
And who, in places where improvers meet,  
To fill the land with fatness, had a seat;  
Who in large mansions live like petty kings,  
And speak of farms but as amusing things;  
Who plans encourage, and who journals keep,  
And talk with lords about a breed of sheep.

Two are the species in this genus known;  
One, who is rich in his profession grown,  
Who yearly finds his ample stores increase,  
From fortune's favours and a favouring lease;  
Who rides his hunter, who his house adorns;  
Who drinks his wine, and his disbursements  
scorns;

Who freely lives, and loves to show he can—  
This is the farmer made the gentleman.

The second species from the world is sent,  
Tired with its strife, or with his wealth content;

In books and men beyond the former read,  
To farming solely by a passion led,  
Or by a fashion; curious in his land;  
Now planning much, now changing what ne  
plann'd;

Pleased by each trial, not by failures vex'd,  
And ever certain to succeed the next;  
Quick to resolve, and easy to persuade—  
This is the gentleman, a farmer made.

Gwyn was of these; he from the world  
withdrew

Early in life, his reasons known to few;  
Some disappointment said, some pure good  
sense,

The love of land, the press of indolence;  
His fortune known, and coming to retire,  
If not a farmer, men had call'd him 'squire.

Forty and five his years, no child or wife  
Cross'd the still tenour of his chosen life;  
Much land he purchased, planted far around,  
And let some portions of superfluous ground  
To farmers near him, not displeased to say,  
'My tenants,' nor 'our worthy landlord,' they.

Fix'd in his farm, he soon display'd his  
skill

In small-boned lambs, the horse-hoe, and the  
drill;

From these he rose to themes of nobler kind,  
And show'd the riches of a fertile mind;

To all around their visits he repaid,  
And thus his mansion and himself display'd,  
His rooms were stately, rather fine than neat.  
And guests politely call'd his house a seat;  
At much expense was each apartment graced,  
His taste was gorgeous, but it still was taste;  
In full festoons the crimson curtains fell,  
The sofas rose in bold elastic swell;  
Mirrors in gilded frames display'd the tints  
Of glowing carpets and of colour'd prints;  
The weary eye saw every object shine,  
And all was costly, fanciful, and fine.

As with his friends he pass'd the social  
hours,

His generous spirit scorn'd to hide its powers;  
Powers unexpected, for his eye and air  
Gave no sure signs that eloquence was there;  
Of he began with sudden fire and force,  
As loth to lose occasion for discourse;  
Some, 'tis observed, who feel a wish to speak,  
Will a due place for introduction seek;  
On to their purpose step by step they steal,  
And all their way, by certain signals, feel;  
Others plunge in at once, and never heed  
Whose turn they take, whose purpose they  
impede;

Resolved to shine, they hasten to begin,  
Of ending thoughtless—and of these was  
Gwyn.

And thus he spake—

——'It grieves me to the soul  
To see how man submits to man's control;  
How overpower'd and shackled minds are led  
In vulgar tracks, and to submission bred;  
The coward never on himself relies,  
But to an equal for assistance flies;  
Man yields to custom as he bows to fate,  
In all things ruled—mind, body, and estate;  
In pain, in sickness, we for cure apply  
To them we know not, and we know not why;  
But that the creature has some jargon read,  
And got some Scotchman's system in his head;  
Some grave impostor, who will health insure,  
Long as your patience or your wealth endure;  
But mark them well, the pale and sickly crew,  
They have not health, and can they give it  
you?

These solemn cheats their various methods  
choose;

A system fires them, as a bard his muse:  
Hence wordy wars arise; the learn'd divide,  
And groaning patients curse each erring  
guide.

Next, our affairs are govern'd, buy or sell,  
Upon the deed the law must fix its spell ;  
Whether we hire or let, we must have still  
The dubious aid of an attorney's skill ;  
They take a part in every man's affairs,  
And in all business some concern is theirs ;  
Because mankind in ways prescribed are  
found,

Like flocks that follow on a beaten ground,  
Each abject nature in the way proceeds,  
That now to shearing, now to slaughter leads.

'Should you offend, though meaning no  
offence,

You have no safety in your innocence ;  
The statute broken then is placed in view,  
And men must pay for crimes they never  
knew :

Who would by law regain his plunder'd store,  
Would pick up fallen merc'ry from the floor ;  
If he pursue it, here and there it slides ;  
He would collect it, but it more divides ;  
This part and this he stops, but still in vain,  
It slips aside, and breaks in parts again ;  
Till, after time and pains, and care and cost,  
He finds his labour and his object lost.

'But most it grieves me, (friends alone are  
round),

To see a man in priestly fetters bound ;  
Guides to the soul, these friends of Heaven  
contrive,

Long as man lives, to keep his fears alive ;  
Soon as an infant breathes, their rites begin ;  
Who knows not sinning, must be freed from  
sin ;

Who needs no bond, must yet engage in vows ;  
Who has no judgment, must a creed espouse :  
Advanced in life, our boys are bound by rules,  
Are catechised in churches, cloisters, schools,  
And train'd in thralldom to be fit for tools :  
The youth grown up, he now a partner needs,  
And lo ! a priest, as soon as he succeeds.

What man of sense can marriage-rites ap-  
prove ?

What man of spirit can be bound to love ?  
Forced to be kind ! compell'd to be sincere !  
Do chains and fetters make companions dear ?  
Pris'ners indeed we bind ; but though the  
bond

May keep them safe, it does not make them  
fond :

The ring, the vow, the witness, licence,  
prayers,

All parties known ! made public all affairs !

Such forms men suffer, and from these they  
date

A deed of love begun with all they hate :  
Absurd ! that none the beaten road should  
shun,

But love to do what other dupes have done.

'Well, now your priest has made you one of  
twin,

Look you for rest ? Alas ! you look in vain.

If sick, he comes ; you cannot die in peace,  
Till he attends to witness your release ;

To vex your soul, and urge you to confess

The sins you feel, remember, or can guess :

Nay, when departed, to your grave he goes,  
But there indeed he hurts not your repose.

'Such are our burthens ; part we must  
sustain,

But need not link new grievance to the chain ;  
Yet men like idiots will their frames surround  
With these vile shackles, nor confess they're  
bound :

In all that most confines them they confide,  
Their slavery boast, and make their bonds  
their pride ;

E'en as the pressure galls them, they declare,  
(Good souls ! ) how happy and how free they  
are !

As madmen, pointing round their wretched  
cells,

Cry, "Lo ! the palace where our honour  
dwells."

'Such is our state ; but I resolve to live  
By rules my reason and my feelings give ;  
No legal guards shall keep enthrall'd my mind,  
No slaves command me, and no teachers  
blind.

'Tempted by sins, let me their strength defy,  
But have no second in a surplice by ;  
No bottle-holder, with officious aid,  
To comfort conscience, weaken'd and afraid :  
Then if I yield, my frailty is not known ;  
And, if I stand, the glory is my own.

'When Truth and Reason are our friends,  
we seem

Alive ! awake !—the superstitious dream.

'Oh ! then, fair Truth, for thee alone I seek,  
Friend to the wise, supporter of the weak ;  
From thee we learn whate'er is right and just ;  
Forms to despise, professions to distrust ;  
Creeds to reject, pretensions to deride,  
And, following thee, to follow none beside.'

Such was the speech ; it struck upon the ear  
Like sudden thunder, none expect to hear.

He saw men's wonder with a manly pride,  
And gravely smiled at guest electrified ;  
' A farmer this ! ' they said, ' Oh ! let him  
seek

That place where he may for his country speak ;  
On some great question to harangue for hours,  
While speakers hearing, envy nobler powers !'

Wisdom like this, as all things rich and rare,  
Must be acquired with pains, and kept with  
care ;

In books he sought it, which his friends might  
view,

When their kind host the guarding curtain  
drew.

There were historic works for graver hours,  
And lighter verse, to spur the languid powers ;  
There metaphysics, logic there had place ;  
But of devotion not a single trace—

Save what is taught in Gibbon's florid page,  
And other guides of this inquiring age ;  
There Hume appear'd, and near, a splendid  
book

Composed by Gay's good Lord of Bolingbroke :  
With these were mix'd the light, the free, the  
vain,

And from a corner peep'd the sage Tom Paine :  
Here four neat volumes Chesterfield were  
named,

For manners much and easy morals famed ;  
With chaste Memoirs of Females, to be read  
When deeper studies had confused the head.

Such his resources, treasures where he  
sought

For daily knowledge till his mind was fraught :  
Then when his friends were present, for their  
use

He would the riches he had stored produce ;  
He found his lamp burn clearer, when each day  
He drew for all he purposed to display :

For these occasions, forth his knowledge  
sprung,

As mustard quickens on a bed of dung ;  
All was prepared, and guests allow'd the  
praise,

For what they saw he could so quickly raise.

Such this new friend ; and when the year  
came round,

The same impressive, reasoning sage was  
found :

Then, too, was seen the pleasant mansion  
graced

With a fair damsel—his no vulgar taste ;  
The neat Rebecca—sly, observant, still ;

Watching his eye, and waiting on his will ;  
Simple yet smart her dress, her manners meek,  
Her smiles spoke for her, she would seldom  
speak :

But watch'd each look, each meaning to  
detect,

And (pleased with notice) felt for all neglect.

With her lived Gwyn a sweet harmonious  
life,

Who, forms excepted, was a charming wife.  
The wives indeed, so made by vulgar law,

Affected scorn, and censured what they saw ;  
And what they saw not, fancied ; said 'twas  
sin,

And took no notice of the wife of Gwyn :  
But he despised their rudeness, and would  
prove

Theirs was compulsion and distrust, not love ;  
' Fools as they were ! could they conceive  
that rings

And parsons' blessings were substantial  
things ?'

They answer'd ' Yes ; ' while he contemptuous  
spoke

Of the low notions held by simple folk ;  
Yet, strange that anger in a man so wise

Should from the notions of these fools arise ;  
Can they so vex us, whom we so despise ?

Brave as he was, our hero felt a dread  
Lest those who saw him kind should think  
him led ;

If to his bosom fear a visit paid,  
It was, lest he should be supposed afraid :

Hence sprang his orders ; not that he desired  
The things when done : obedience he re-  
quired ;

And thus, to prove his absolute command,  
Ruled every heart, and moved each subject  
hand,

Assent he ask'd for every word and whim,  
To prove that *he alone was king of him*.

The still Rebecca, who her station knew,  
With ease resign'd the honours not her due ;

Well pleased, she saw that men her board  
would grace,

And wish'd not there to see a female face ;  
When by her lover she his spouse was styled,

Polite she thought it, and demurely smiled ;  
But when he wanted wives and maidens round

So to regard her, she grew grave, and frown'd ;  
And sometimes whisper'd—' Why should you  
respect

These people's notions, yet their forms reject ?'

Gwyn, though from marriage bond and  
fetter free,  
Still felt abridgment in his liberty ;  
Something of hesitation he betray'd,  
And in her presence thought of what he said.  
Thus fair Rebecca, though she walk'd astray,  
His creed rejecting, judged it right to pray ;  
To be at church, to sit with serious looks,  
To read her Bible and her Sunday-books :  
She hated all those new and daring themes,  
And call'd his free conjectures, 'devil's  
dreams :'

She honour'd still the priesthood in her fall,  
And claim'd respect and reverence for them  
all ;

Call'd them 'of sin's destructive power the  
foes,

And not such blockheads as he might suppose.'

Gwyn to his friends would smile, and some-  
times say,

' 'Tis a kind fool, why vex her in her way ?'

Her way she took, and still had more in view,  
For she contrived that he should take it too.

The daring freedom of his soul, 'twas plain,  
In part was lost in a divided reign ;

A king and queen, who yet in prudence sway'd  
Their peaceful state, and were in turn obey'd.

Yet such our fate, that when we plan the  
best,

Something arises to disturb our rest :

For though in spirits high, in body strong,  
Gwyn something felt—he knew not what—  
was wrong ;

He wish'd to know, for he believed the thing,  
If unremoved, would other evil bring:

'She must perceive of late he could not eat,  
And when he walk'd, he trembled on his  
feet :

He had forebodings, and he seem'd as one  
Stopp'd on the road, or threaten'd by a dun ;

He could not live, and yet, should he apply  
To those physicians—he must sooner die.'

The mild Rebecca heard with some disdain,  
And some distress, her friend and lord com-  
plain :

His death she fear'd not, but had painful doubt  
What his distemper'd nerves might bring  
about ;

With power like hers she dreaded an ally,  
And yet there was a person in her eye :—

She thought, debated, fix'd—'Alas !' she  
said,

'A case like yours must be no more delay'd :

You hate these doctors : well ! but were  
a friend

And doctor one, your fears would have an end :  
My cousin Mollet—Scotland holds him now—

Is above all men skilful, all allow ;  
Of late a doctor, and within a while

He means to settle in this favour'd isle ;  
Should he attend you, with his skill profound,

You must be safe, and shortly would besound.'

When men in health against physicians rail,  
They should consider that their nerves may  
fail ;

Who calls a lawyer rogue, may find, too late,  
On one of these depends his whole estate :

Nay, when the world can nothing more  
produce,

The priest, th' insulted priest, may have his  
use ;

Ease, health, and comfort, lift a man so high,  
These powers are dwarfs that he can scarcely  
spy ;

Pain, sickness, languor keep a man so low,  
That these neglected dwarfs to giants grow.

Happy is he who through the medium sees  
Of clear good sense—but Gwyn was not of  
these.

He heard and he rejoiced : 'Ah ! let him  
come,

And till he fixes, make my house his home.'

Home came the doctor—he was much  
admir'd ;

He told the patient what his case required ;  
His hours for sleep, his time to eat and drink ;

When he should ride, read, rest, compose, or  
think.

Thus join'd peculiar skill and art profound,  
To make the fancy-sick no more than fancy-  
sound.

With such attention, who could long be ill ?  
Returning health proclaim'd the doctor's skill.

Presents and praises from a grateful heart  
Were freely offer'd on the patient's part ;

In high repute the doctor seem'd to stand,  
But still had got no footing in the land ;

And, as he saw the seat was rich and fair,  
He felt disposed to fix his station there :

To gain his purpose he perform'd the part  
Of a good actor, and prepared to start ;

Not like a traveller in a day serene,  
When the sun shone and when the roads

were clean ;  
Not like the pilgrim, when the morning gray,

The ruddy eve succeeding, sends his way ;



But in a season when the sharp east wind  
Had all its influence on a nervous mind ;  
When past the parlour's front it fiercely blew,  
And Gwyn sat pitying every bird that flew,  
This strange physician said—' Adieu ! adieu !  
Farewell !—Heaven bless you !—if you should  
—but no,

You need not fear—farewell ! 'tis time to go.'

The doctor spoke ; and as the patient heard,  
His old disorders (dreadful train !) appear'd ;  
' He felt the tingling tremor, and the stress  
Upon his nerves that he could not express ;  
Should his good friend forsake him, he perhaps  
Might meet his death, and surely a relapse.'

So, as the doctor seem'd intent to part,  
He cried in terror—' Oh ! be where thou art :  
Come, thou art young, and unengaged ; oh !  
come,

Make me thy friend, give comfort to mine  
home ;

I have now symptoms that require thine aid,  
Do, doctor, stay'—th' obliging doctor stay'd.

Thus Gwyn was happy ; he had now a friend,  
And a meek spouse on whom he could depend :  
But now possess'd of male and female guide,  
Divided power he thus must subdivide :  
In earlier days he rode, or sat at ease  
Reclined, and having but himself to please ;  
Now if he would a fav'rite nag bestride  
He sought permission—' Doctor, may I ride ?'  
(Rebecca's eye her sovereign pleasure told)—  
' I think you may, but guarded from the cold,  
Ride forty minutes.'—Free and happy soul !  
He scorn'd submission, and a man's control ;  
But where such friends in every care unite  
All for his good, obedience is delight.

Now Gwyn a sultan bade affairs adieu,  
Led and assisted by the faithful two ;  
The favourite fair, Rebecca, near him sat,  
And whisper'd whom to love, assist, or hate ;  
While the chief vizier eased his lord of cares,  
And bore himself the burden of affairs :  
No dangers could from such alliance flow,  
But from that law, that changes all below.  
—When wintry winds with leaves bestrew'd  
the ground,

And men were coughing all the village round ;  
When public papers of invasion told,  
Diseases, famines, perils new and old ;  
When philosophic writers fail'd to clear  
The mind of gloom, and lighter works to cheer ;  
Then came fresh terrors on our hero's mind—  
Fears unforeseen, and feelings undefined.

' In outward ills,' he cried, ' I rest assured  
Of my friend's aid ; they will in time be cured :  
But can his art subdue, resist, control  
These inward griefs and troubles of the soul ?  
Oh ! my Rebecca ! my disorder'd mind,  
No help in study, none in thought can find ;  
What must I do, Rebecca ?' She proposed  
The parish guide ; but what could be disclosed  
To a proud priest ?—' No ! him have I defied,  
Insulted, slighted—shall he be my guide ?  
But one there is, and if report be just,  
A wise good man, whom I may safely trust ;  
Who goes from house to house, from ear to  
ear,

To make his truths, his Gospel truths, appear ;  
True if indeed they be, 'tis time that I should  
hear :

Send for that man ; and if report be just,  
I, like Cornelius, will the teacher trust ;  
But if deceiver, I the vile deceit

Shall soon discover, and discharge the cheat.'

To Doctor Mollet was the grief confess'd,  
While Gwyn the freedom of his mind ex-  
press'd ;

Yet own'd it was to ills and errors prone,  
And he for guilt and frailty must atone.

' My books, perhaps,' the wav'ring mortal  
cried,

' Like men deceive—I would be satisfied ;  
And to my soul the pious man may bring  
Comfort and light—do let me try the thing.'

The cousins met, what pass'd with Gwyn  
was told :

' Alas ! ' the doctor said, ' how hard to hold  
These easy minds, where all impressions made  
At first sink deeply, and then quickly fade ;  
For while so strong these new-born fancies  
reign,

We must divert them, to oppose is vain :  
You see him valiant now, he scorns to heed  
The bigot's threatenings or the zealot's creed ;  
Shook by a dream, he next for truth receives  
What frenzy teaches, and what fear believes ;  
And this will place him in the power of one  
Whom we must seek, because we cannot shun.'

Wisp had been ostler at a busy inn,  
Where he beheld and grew in dread of sin ;  
Then to a Baptists' meeting found his way,  
Became a convert, and was taught to pray ;  
Then preach'd ; and being earnest and sincere,  
Brought other sinners to religious fear :  
Together grew his influence and his fame,  
Till our dejected hero heard his name :

His little failings were a grain of pride,  
 Raised by the numbers he presumed to guide :  
 A love of presents, and of lofty praise  
 For his meek spirit and his humble ways ;  
 But though this spirit would on flattery

feed,  
 No praise could blind him and no arts mis-  
 lead :—

To him the doctor made the wishes known  
 Of his good patron, but conceal'd his own ;  
 He of all teachers had distrust and doubt,  
 And was reserved in what he came about ;  
 Though on a plain and simple message sent,  
 He had a secret and a bold intent :  
 Their minds at first were deeply veil'd ;  
 disguise

Form'd the slow speech, and op'd the eager  
 eyes ;

Till by degrees sufficient light was thrown  
 On every view, and all the business shown.  
 Wisp, as a skilful guide who led the blind,  
 Had powers to rule and awe the vapourish  
 mind ;

But not the changeful will, the wavering fear  
 to bind :

And should his conscience give him leave to  
 dwell

With Gwyn, and every rival power expel  
 (A dubious point), yet he, with every care,  
 Might soon the lot of the rejected share ;  
 And other Wisps be found like him to reign,  
 And then be thrown upon the world again :  
 He thought it prudent then, and felt it  
 just,

The present guides of his new friend to trust ;  
 True, he conceived, to touch the harder heart  
 Of the cool doctor, was beyond his art ;  
 But mild Rebecca he could surely sway,  
 While Gwyn would follow where she led the  
 way :

So to do good, (and why a duty shun,  
 Because rewarded for the good when done ?)  
 He with his friends would join in all they  
 plann'd,

Save when his faith or feelings should with-  
 stand ;

There he must rest, sole judge of his affairs,  
 While they might rule exclusively in theirs.

When Gwyn his message to the teacher sent,  
 He fear'd his friends would show their dis-  
 content ;

And prudent seem'd it to th' attendant pair,  
 Not all at once to show an aspect fair :  
 On Wisp they seem'd to look with jealous eye,  
 And fair Rebecca was demure and shy ;  
 But by degrees the teacher's worth they knew,  
 And were so kind, they seem'd converted too.

Wisp took occasion to the nymph to say,  
 ' You must be married : will you name the  
 day ? '

She smiled,—' 'Tis well ; but should he not  
 comply,

Is it quite safe th' experiment to try ? '—  
 ' My child,' the teacher said, ' who feels  
 remorse,

(And feels not he ?) must wish relief of course ;  
 And can he find it, while he fears the crime ?—  
 You must be married ; will you name the  
 time ? '

Glad was the patron as a man could be,  
 Yet marvell'd too, to find his guides agree ;  
 ' But what the cause ? ' he cried ; ' 'tis  
 genuine love for me.'

Each found his part, and let one act describe  
 The powers and honours of th' accordant  
 tribe :—

A man for favour to the mansion speeds,  
 And cons his threefold task as he proceeds ;  
 To teacher Wisp he bows with humble air,  
 And begs his interest for a barn's repair :  
 Then for the doctor he inquires, who loves  
 To hear applause for what his skill improves,  
 And gives for praise, assent,—and to the fair  
 He brings of pullets a delicious pair ;  
 Thus sees a peasant with discernment nice,  
 A love of power, conceit, and avarice.

Lo ! now the change complete : the convert  
 Gwyn

Has sold his books, and has renounced his  
 sin ;

Mollet his body orders, Wisp his soul,  
 And o'er his purse the lady takes control ;  
 No friends beside he needs, and none attend—  
 Soul, body, and estate, has each a friend ;  
 And fair Rebecca leads a virtuous life—  
 She rules a mistress, and she reigns a wife.

## TALE IV. PROCRASTINATION

Heaven witness

I have been to you a true and humble wife.

*Henry VIII, Act ii, Scene 4.*

Gentle lady,

When I did first impart my love to you,

I freely told you all the wealth I had.

*Merchant of Venice, Act iii, Scene 2.*

The leisure and the fearful time

Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love,

And ample interchange of sweet discourse,

Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell

upon. *Richard III, Act v, Scene 3.*

I know thee not, old man : fall to thy prayers.

*2 Henry IV, Act v, Scene 5.*

Farewell,

Thou pure impiety, and impious purity,

For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love.

*Much Ado about Nothing, Act iv, Scene 1.*

Love will expire, the gay, the happy dream

Will turn to scorn, indifference, or esteem :

Some favour'd pairs, in this exchange, are

bless'd,

Nor sigh for raptures in a state of rest ;

Others, ill match'd, with minds unpair'd,

repent

At once the deed, and know no more content ;

From joy to anguish they, in haste, decline,

And with their fondness, their esteem resign :

More luckless still their fate, who are the prey

Of long-protracted hope and dull delay ;

'Mid plans of bliss the heavy hours pass on,

Till love is wither'd, and till joy is gone.

This gentle flame two youthful hearts

possess'd,

The sweet disturber of unenvied rest :

The prudent Dinah was the maid beloved,

And the kind Rupert was the swain approved :

A wealthy aunt her gentle niece sustain'd,

He, with a father, at his desk remain'd ;

The youthful couple, to their vows sincere,

Thus loved expectant ; year succeeding year,

With pleasant views and hopes, but not a

prospect near.

Rupert some comfort in his station saw,

But the poor virgin lived in dread and awe ;

Upon her anxious looks the widow smiled,

And bade her wait, ' for she was yet a child.'

She for her neighbour had a due respect,

Nor would his son encourage or reject ;

And thus the pair, with expectations vain,

Beheld the seasons change and change again :

Meantime the nymph her tender tales perused,

Where cruel aunts impatient girls refused ;

While hers, though teasing, boasted to be kind,

And she, resenting, to be all resign'd.

The dame was sick, and when the youth

applied

For her consent, she groan'd, and cough'd,

and cried :

Talk'd of departing, and again her breath

Drew hard, and cough'd, and talk'd again of

death :

' Here you may live, my Dinah ! here the boy

And you together my estate enjoy ;'

Thus to the lovers was her mind express'd,

Till they forbore to urge the fond request.

Servant, and nurse, and comforter, and

friend,

Dinah had still some duty to attend ;

But yet their walk, when Rupert's evening call

Obtain'd an hour, made sweet amends for all ;

So long they now each other's thoughts had

known,

That nothing seem'd exclusively their own ;

But with the common wish, the mutual fear,

They now had travell'd to their thirtieth year.

At length a prospect open'd—but, alas !

Long time must yet, before the union, pass ;

Rupert was call'd in other clime, t' increase

Another's wealth, and toil for future peace ;

Loth were the lovers ; but the aunt declared

'Twas fortune's call, and they must be pre-

pared ;

' You now are young, and for this brief delay,

And Dinah's care, what I bequeath will pay ;

All will be yours ; nay, love, suppress that

sigh ;

The kind must suffer, and the best must die :'

Then came the cough, and strong the signs it

gave

Of holding long contention with the grave.

The lovers parted with a gloomy view,

And little comfort but that both were true ;

He for uncertain duties doom'd to steer,

While hers remain'd too certain and severe.

Letters arrived, and Rupert fairly told

' His cares were many, and his hopes were

cold ;

The view more clouded, that was never fair,  
And love alone preserved him from despair :  
In other letters brighter hopes he drew,  
' His friends were kind, and he believed them true.'

When the sage widow Dinah's grief descried,  
She wonder'd much why one so happy sigh'd :  
Then bade her see how her poor aunt sustain'd  
The ills of life, nor murmur'd nor complain'd.  
To vary pleasures, from the lady's chest  
Were drawn the pearly string and tabby vest ;  
Beads, jewels, laces, all their value shewn,  
With the kind notice—' They will be your own.'

This hope, these comforts cherish'd day by day,  
To Dinah's bosom made a gradual way ;  
Till love of treasure had as large a part,  
As love of Rupert, in the virgin's heart.  
Whether it be that tender passions fail,  
From their own nature, while the strong  
prevail ;

Or whether av'rice, like the poison-tree,\*  
Kills all beside it, and alone will be ;  
Whatever cause prevail'd, the pleasure grew  
In Dinah's soul,—she loved the hoards to view ;

With lively joy those comforts she survey'd,  
And love grew languid in the careful maid.

Now the grave niece partook the widow's cares,  
Look'd to the great and ruled the small affairs ;  
Saw clean'd the plate, arranged the china show,

And felt her passion for a shilling grow :  
Th' indulgent aunt increased the maid's delight,

By placing tokens of her wealth in sight ;  
She loved the value of her bonds to tell,  
And spake of stocks, and how they rose and fell.

This passion grew, and gain'd at length such sway,  
That other passions shrank to make it way ;  
Romantic notions now the heart forsook,  
She read but seldom, and she changed her book ;

\* Allusion is here made, not to the well-known species of *sumach*, called the poison oak, or *toxicodendron*, but to the *upas*, or poison-tree of Java : whether it be real or imaginary, this is no proper place for inquiry.

And for the verses she was wont to send,  
Short was her prose, and she was Rupert's friend.

Seldom she wrote, and then the widow's cough,

And constant call, excused her breaking off ;  
Who, now oppress'd, no longer took the air,  
But sat and dozed upon an easy chair.

The cautious doctor saw the case was clear,  
But judg'd it best to have companions near ;  
They came, they reason'd, they prescribed—  
at last,

Like honest men, they said their hopes were past ;

Then came a priest—'tis comfort to reflect,  
When all is over, there was no neglect ;  
And all was over—by her husband's bones,  
The widow rests beneath the sculptured stones,  
That yet record their fondness and their fame,  
While all they left the virgin's care became ;  
Stock, bonds, and buildings ;—it disturb'd  
her rest,

To think what load of troubles she possess'd :  
Yet, if a trouble, she resolved to take  
Th' important duty, for the donor's sake ;  
She too was heiress to the widow's taste,  
Her love of hoarding, and her dread of waste.

Sometimes the past would on her mind intrude,

And then a conflict full of care ensued ;  
The thoughts of Rupert on her mind would press,

His worth she knew, but doubted his success ;  
Of old she saw him heedless ; what the boy  
Forbore to save, the man would not enjoy ;  
Oft had he lost the chance that care would seize,

Willing to live, but more to live at ease :  
Yet could she not a broken vow defend,  
And Heav'n, perhaps, might yet enrich her friend.

Month after month was pass'd, and all were spent

In quiet comfort and in rich content :  
Miseries there were, and woes the world  
around,

But these had not her pleasant dwelling found ;  
She knew that mothers grieved, and widows wept,

And she was sorry, said her prayers, and slept :

Thus pass'd the seasons, and to Dinah's board  
Gave what the seasons to the rich afford ;

For she indulged, nor was her heart so small,  
That one strong passion should engross it all.

A love of splendour now with a'rice strove,  
And oft appear'd to be the stronger love :  
A secret pleasure fill'd the widow's breast,  
When she reflected on the boards possess'd ;  
But livelier joy inspired th' ambitious maid,  
When she the purchase of those hoards display'd :

In small but splendid room she loved to see  
That all was placed in view and harmony ;  
There, as with eager glance she look'd around,  
She much delight in every object found ;  
While books devout were near her—to destroy,  
Should it arise, an overflow of joy.

Within that fair apartment, guests might see  
The comforts cull'd for wealth by vanity :  
Around the room an Indian paper blazed,  
With lively tint and figures boldly raised ;  
Silky and soft upon the floor below,  
Th' elastic carpet rose with crimson glow ;  
All things around implied both cost and care,  
What met the eye was elegant or rare :  
Some curious trifles round the room were laid,  
By hope presented to the wealthy maid :  
Within a costly case of varnish'd wood,  
In level rows, her polish'd volumes stood ;  
Shown as a favour to a chosen few,  
To prove what beauty for a book could do :  
A silver urn with curious work was fraught ;  
A silver lamp from Grecian pattern wrought :  
Above her head, all gorgeous to behold,  
A time-piece stood on feet of burnish'd gold ;  
A stag's head crest adorned the pictured case,  
Through the pure crystal shone th' enamell'd face ;

And while on brilliants moved the hands of steel,  
It click'd from pray'r to pray'r, from meal to meal.

Here as the lady sate, a friendly pair  
Stept in t' admire the view, and took their chair.  
They then related how the young and gay  
Were thoughtless wandering in the broad highway ;

How tender damsels sail'd in tilted boats,  
And laugh'd with wicked men in scarlet coats ;  
And how we live in such degen'rate times,  
That men conceal their wants, and show their crimes ;

While vicious deeds are screen'd by fashion's name,

And what was once our pride is now our shame.

Dinah was musing, as her friends discour-  
coursed,

When these last words a sudden entrance  
forced

Upon her mind, and what was once her pride  
And now her shame, some painful views  
supplied ;

Thoughts of the past within her bosom press'd,  
And there a change was felt, and was con-  
fess'd :

While thus the virgin strove with secret pain,  
Her mind was wandering o'er the troubled  
main ;

Still she was silent, nothing seem'd to see,  
But sate and sigh'd in pensive reverie.

The friends prepared new subjects to begin,  
When tall Susannah, maiden starch, stalk'd  
in ;

Not in her ancient mode, sedate and slow,  
As when she came, the mind she knew, to  
know ;

Nor as, when list'ning half an hour before,  
She twice or thrice tapp'd gently at the door ;  
But, all decorum cast in wrath aside,

' I think the devil's in the man ! ' she cried ;  
' A huge tall sailor, with his tawny check,

And pitted face, will with my lady speak ;  
He grinn'd an ugly smile, and said he knew,  
Please you, my lady, 'twould be joy to you ;  
What must I answer ? '—Trembling and  
distress'd

Sank the pale Dinah by her fears oppress'd ;  
When thus alarm'd, and brooking no delay,  
Swift to her room the stranger made his way.

' Revive, my love ! ' said he, ' I've done  
thee harm,

Give me thy pardon,' and he look'd alarm :  
Meantime the prudent Dinah had contrived  
Her soul to question, and she then revived.

' See ! my good friend,' and then she raised  
her head,

' The bloom of life, the strength of youth is  
fled ;

Living we die ; to us the world is dead ;  
We parted bless'd with health, and I am now  
Age-struck and feeble, so I find art thou ;  
Thine eye is sunken, furrow'd is thy face,  
And downward look'st thou—so we run our  
race ;

And happier they, whose race is nearly run,  
Their troubles over, and their duties done.'

' True, lady, true, we are not girl and boy ;  
But time has left us something to enjoy.'

'What! thou hast learn'd my fortune?—  
yes, I live

To feel how poor the comforts wealth can give;  
Thou too perhaps art wealthy; but our fate  
Still mocks our wishes, wealth is come too  
late.'

'To me nor late nor early; I am come—  
Poor as I left thee to my native home:  
Nor yet,' said Rupert, 'will I grieve; 'tis mine  
To share thy comforts, and the glory thine;  
For thou wilt gladly take that generous part  
That both exalts and gratifies the heart;  
While mine rejoices.'—'Heavens!' return'd  
the maid,

'This talk to one so wither'd and decay'd?  
No! all my care is now to fit my mind  
For other spousal, and to die resign'd:  
As friend and neighbour, I shall hope to see  
These noble views, this pious love in thee;  
That we together may the change await,  
Guides and spectators in each other's fate;  
When fellow-pilgrims, we shall daily crave  
The mutual prayer that arms us for the grave.'

Half angry, half in doubt, the lover gazed  
On the meek maiden, by her speech amazed;  
'Dinah,' said he, 'dost thou respect thy vows?  
What spousal mean'st thou?—thou art  
Rupert's spouse;

The chance is mine to take, and thine to give;  
But, trifling this, if we together live:  
Can I believe, that, after all the past,  
Our vows, our loves, thou wilt be false at last?  
Something thou hast—I know not what—in  
view;

I find thee pious—let me find thee true.'

'Ah! cruel this; but do, my friend, depart;  
And to its feelings leave my wounded heart.'

'Nay, speak at once; and Dinah, let me  
know,

Mean'st thou to take me, now I'm wreck'd,  
in tow?

Be fair; nor longer keep me in the dark;  
Am I forsaken for a trimmer spark?

Heav'n's spouse thou art not; nor can I  
believe

That God accepts her who will man deceive:  
True I am shatter'd, I have service seen,  
And service done, and have in trouble been;  
My cheek (it shames me not) has lost its red,  
And the brown buff is o'er my features spread;  
Perchance my speech is rude; for I among  
Th' untamed have been, in temper and in  
tongue;

Have been trepann'd, have lived in toil and  
care,  
And wrought for wealth I was not doom'd to  
share;

It touch'd me deeply, for I felt a pride  
In gaining riches for my destined bride:  
Speak then my fate; for these my sorrows  
past,

Time lost, youth fled, hope wearied, and at  
last

This doubt of thee—a childish thing to tell,  
But certain truth—my very throat they  
swell;

They stop the breath, and but for shame  
could I

Give way to weakness, and with passion cry;  
These are unmanly struggles, but I feel  
This hour must end them, and perhaps will  
heal.'

Here Dinah sigh'd as if afraid to speak—  
And then repeated—'They were frail and  
weak;

His soul she loved, and hoped he had the grace  
To fix his thoughts upon a better place.'

She ceased;—with steady glance, as if to see  
The very root of this hypocrisy,—  
He her small fingers moulded in his hard  
And bronzed broad hand; then told her his  
regard,

His best respect were gone, but love had still  
Hold in his heart, and govern'd yet the will—  
Or he would curse her:—saying this, he threw  
The hand in scorn away, and bade adieu  
To every lingering hope, with every care in  
view.

Proud and indignant, suffering, sick, and  
poor,

He grieved unseen; and spoke of love no  
more—

Till all he felt in indignation died,  
As hers had sunk in avarice and pride.

In health declining, as in mind distress'd,  
To some in power his troubles he confess'd,  
And shares a parish-gift;—at prayers he sees  
The pious Dinah dropped upon her knees;  
Thence as she walks the street with stately air,  
As chance directs, oft meet the parted pair:  
When he, with thickset coat of badge-man's  
blue,

Moves near her shaded silk of changeful hue;  
When his thin locks of grey approach her  
braid,

A costly purchase made in beauty's aid;

When his frank air, and his unstudied pace,  
Are seen with her soft manner, air, and grace,  
And his plain artless look with her sharp  
meaning face;

It might some wonder in a stranger move,  
How these together could have talk'd of love.

Behold them now!—see there a tradesman  
stands,

And humbly hearkens to some fresh com-  
mands;

He moves to speak, she interrupts him—  
'Stay,'

Her air expresses—'Hark! to what I say: '  
Ten paces off, poor Rupert on a seat  
Has taken refuge from the noon-day heat,  
His eyes on her intent, as if to find  
What were the movements of that subtle  
mind:

How still!—how earnest is he!—it appears  
His thoughts are wand'ring through his  
earlier years;

Through years of fruitless labour, to the day  
When all his earthly prospects died away:

'Had I,' he thinks, 'been wealthier of the two,  
Would she have found me so unkind, untrue? Or  
knows not man when poor, what man  
when rich will do?

Yes, yes! I feel that I had faithful proved,  
And should have soothed and raised her,  
bless'd and loved.'

But Dinah moves—she had observed before  
The pensive Rupert at an humble door:  
Some thoughts of pity raised by his distress,  
Some feeling touch of ancient tenderness;  
Religion, duty urged the maid to speak  
In terms of kindness to a man so weak:  
But pride forbad, and to return would prove  
She felt the shame of his neglected love;  
Nor wrapp'd in silence could she pass, afraid  
Each eye should see her, and each heart  
upbraid;

One way remain'd—the way the Levite took,  
Who without mercy could on misery look;  
(A way perceived by craft, approved by pride),  
She cross'd, and pass'd him on the other  
side.

## TALE V. THE PATRON

It were all one,  
That I should love a bright particular star,  
And think to wed it; he is so above me:  
In his bright radiance and collateral light  
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, Act I, Scene 1.

Poor wretches, that depend  
On greatness' favour, dream as I have done,—  
Wake and find nothing.

*Cymbeline*, Act v, Scene 4.

And since . . .

Th' affliction of my mind amends, with which  
I fear a madness held me.

*The Tempest*, Act v, Scene 1.

A BOROUGH-BAILIFF, who to law was train'd,  
A wife and sons in decent state maintain'd;  
He had his way in life's rough ocean steer'd,  
And many a rock and coast of danger clear'd:  
He saw where others fail'd, and care had he  
Others in him should not such failings see;  
His sons in various busy states were placed,  
And all began the sweets of gain to taste,  
Save John, the younger; who, of sprightly  
parts,

Felt not a love for money-making arts:

In childhood feeble, he, for country air,  
Had long resided with a rustic pair;  
All round whose room were doleful ballads,  
songs,

Of lovers' sufferings and of ladies' wrongs;  
Of peevish ghosts who came at dark mid-  
night,

For breach of promise, guilty men to fright;  
Love, marriage, murder, were the themes,  
with these,

All that on idle, ardent spirits seize;  
Robbers at land and pirates on the main,  
Enchanters foil'd, spells broken, giants slain;  
Legends of love, with tales of halls and bowers,  
Choice of rare songs, and garlands of choice  
flowers,

And all the hungry mind without a choice  
devours.

From village-children kept apart by pride,  
With such enjoyments, and without a guide,  
Inspired by feelings all such works infused,  
John snatch'd a pen, and wrote as he pe-  
rused:

With the like fancy he could make his knight  
Slay half an host and put the rest to flight;

With the like knowledge, he could make him  
ride

From isle to isle at Parthenissa's side ;  
And with a heart yet free, no busy brain  
Form'd wilder notions of delight and pain,  
The raptures smiles create, the anguish of  
disdain.

Such were the fruits of John's poetic toil,  
Weeds, but still proofs of vigour in the soil :  
He nothing purposed but with vast delight,  
Let Fancy loose, and wonder'd at her flight :  
His notions of poetic worth were high,  
And of his own still-hoarded poetry ;—  
These to his father's house he bore with pride,  
A miser's treasure, in his room to hide ;  
Till spurr'd by glory, to a reading friend  
He kindly show'd the sonnets he had penn'd :  
With erring judgment, though with heart  
sincere,  
That friend exclaim'd, ' These beauties must  
appear.'

In Magazines they claim'd their share of fame,  
Though undistinguish'd by their author's  
name ;

And with delight the young enthusiast found  
The muse of Marcus with applauses crown'd.  
This heard the father, and with some alarm :  
' The boy,' said he, ' will neither trade nor  
farm ;  
He for both law and physic is unfit ;  
Wit he may have, but cannot live on wit :  
Let him his talents then to learning give,  
Where verse is honour'd, and where poets  
live.'

John kept his terms at college unreprieved,  
Took his degree, and left the life he loved ;  
Not yet ordain'd, his leisure he employ'd  
In the light labours he so much enjoy'd ;  
His favourite notions and his daring views  
Were cherish'd still, and he adored the Muse.

' A little time, and he should burst to light,  
And admiration of the world excite ;  
And every friend, now cool and apt to blame  
His fond pursuit, would wonder at his fame.'  
When led by fancy, and from view retired,  
He call'd before him all his heart desired ;  
' Fame shall be mine, then wealth shall I  
possess,

And beauty next an ardent lover bless ;  
For me the maid shall leave her nobler state,  
Happy to raise and share her poet's fate.'  
He saw each day his father's frugal board,  
With simple fare by cautious prudence stored ;

Where each indulgence was foreweigh'd with  
care,

And the grand maxims were to save and spare:  
Yet in his walks, his closet, and his bed,  
All frugal cares and prudent counsels fled ;  
And bounteous Fancy, for his glowing mind,  
Wrought various scenes, and all of glorious  
kind ;

Slaves of the *ring* and *lamp* ! what need of you  
When Fancy's self such magic deeds can do ?

Though rapt in visions of no vulgar kind,  
To common subjects stoop'd our poet's mind ;  
And oft, when wearied with more ardent flight,  
He felt a spur satiric song to write ;  
A rival Burgess his bold muse attack'd,  
And whipp'd severely for a well-known fact ;  
For while he seem'd to all demure and shy,  
Our poet gazed at what was passing by ;  
And ev'n his father smiled when playful wit,  
From his young bard, some haughty object  
hit.

From ancient times the borough where they  
dwelt

Had mighty contest at elections felt :  
Sir Godfrey Ball, 'tis true, had held in pay  
Electors many for the trying day ;  
But in such golden chains to bind them all  
Required too much for e'en Sir Godfrey Ball.  
A member died, and to supply his place,  
Two heroes enter'd for th' important race ;  
Sir Godfrey's friend and Earl Fitzdonnel's son,  
Lord Frederick Damer, both prepared to run ;  
And partial numbers saw with vast delight  
Their good young lord oppose the proud old  
knight.

Our poet's father, at a first request,  
Gave the young lord his vote and interest ;  
And what he could our poet, for he stung  
The foe by verse satiric, said and sung.  
Lord Frederick heard of all this youthful zeal,  
And felt as lords upon a canvass feel ;  
He read the satire, and he saw the use  
That such cool insult, and such keen abuse,  
Might on the wavering minds of voting men  
produce ;

Then too his praises were in contrast seen,  
' A lord as noble as the knight was mean.'

' I much rejoice,' he cried, ' such worth to  
find ;

To this the world must be no longer blind :  
His glory will descend from sire to son,  
The Burns of English race, the happier  
Chatterton.'



Our poet's mind, now hurried and elate,  
Alarm'd the anxious parent for his fate;  
Who saw with sorrow, should their friend  
succeed,

That much discretion would the poet need.

Their friend succeeded, and repaid the zeal  
The poet felt, and made opposers feel,  
By praise (from lords how soothing and how  
sweet !)

And invitation to his noble seat.

The father ponder'd, doubtful if the brain  
Of his proud boy such honour could sustain ;  
Pleased with the favours offer'd to a son,  
But seeing dangers few so ardent shun.

Thus, when they parted, to the youthful  
breast

The father's fears were by his love impress'd :  
'There will you find, my son, the courteous ease  
That must subdue the soul it means to please ;  
That soft attention which ev'n beauty pays  
To wake our passions, or provoke our praise ;  
There all the eye beholds will give delight,  
Where every sense is flattered like the sight :  
This is your peril ; can you from such scene  
Of splendour part, and feel your mind serene,  
And in the father's humble state resume  
The frugal diet and the narrow room ?'  
To this the youth with cheerful heart replied,  
Pleased with the trial, but as yet untried ;  
And while professing patience, should he fail,  
He suffer'd hope o'er reason to prevail.

Impatient, by the morning mail convey'd,  
The happy guest his promised visit paid ;  
And now arriving at the hall, he tried  
For air composed, serene and satisfied ;  
As he had practised in his room alone,  
And there acquired a free and easy tone :  
There he had said, ' Whatever the degree  
A man obtains, what more than man is he ?'  
And when arrived—' This room is but a room ;  
Can aught we see the steady soul o'ercome ?  
Let me in all a manly firmness show,  
Upheld by talents, and their value know.'

This reason urged ; but it surpass'd his skill  
To be in act as manly as in will :  
When he his lordship and the lady saw,  
Brave as he was, he felt oppress'd with awe ;  
And spite of verse, that so much praise had  
won,

The poet found he was the bailiff's son.

But dinner came, and the succeeding hours  
Fix'd his weak nerves, and raised his failing  
powers ;

Praised and assured, he ventured once or  
twice

On some remark, and bravely broke the ice ;  
So that at night, reflecting on his words,  
He found, in time, he might converse with  
lords.

Now was the sister of his patron seen—  
A lovely creature, with majestic mien ;  
Who, softly smiling while she look'd so fair,  
Praised the young poet with such friendly air ;  
Such winning frankness in her looks express'd,  
And such attention to her brother's guest,  
That so much beauty, join'd with speech so  
kind,

Raised strong emotions in the poet's mind ;  
Till reason fail'd his bosom to defend

From the sweet power of this enchanting  
friend.—

Rash boy ! what hope thy frantic mind  
invades ?

What love confuses, and what pride per-  
suades ?

Awake to truth ! shouldst thou deluded feed  
On hopes so groundless, thou art mad indeed.

What say'st thou, wise-one ? ' that all-  
powerful love

' Can fortune's strong impediments remove ;  
Nor is it strange that worth should wed to  
worth,

The pride of genius with the pride of birth.'  
While thou art dreaming thus, the beauty  
spies

Love in thy tremor, passion in thine eyes ;  
And with th' amusement pleased, of conquest  
vain,

She seeks her pleasure, careless of thy pain ;  
She gives thee praise to humble and confound,  
Smiles to ensnare, and flatters thee to wound.

Why has she said that in the lowest state  
The noble mind insures a noble fate ?

And why thy daring mind to glory call ?  
That thou may'st dare and suffer, soar and  
fall.

Beauties are tyrants, and if they can reign,  
They have no feeling for their subjects' pain ;  
Their victim's anguish gives their charms  
applause,

And their chief glory is the woe they cause :  
Something of this was felt, in spite of love,  
Which hope, in spite of reason, would remove.

Thus lived our youth, with conversation,  
books,

And Lady Emma's soul-subduing looks ;

Lost in delight, astonish'd at his lot,  
 All prudence banish'd, all advice forgot—  
 Hopes, fears, and every thought, were fix'd  
 upon the spot.

'Twas autumn yet, and many a day must  
 frown

On Brandon-Hall, ere went my lord to town ;  
 Meantime the father, who had heard his boy  
 Lived in a round of luxury and joy,  
 And justly thinking that the youth was one  
 Who, meeting danger, was unskill'd to shun ;  
 Knowing his temper, virtue, spirit, zeal,  
 How prone to hope and trust, believe and feel ;  
 These on the parent's soul their weight  
 impress'd,

And thus he wrote the counsels of his breast.

' John, thou'rt a genius ; thou hast some  
 pretence,

I think, to wit, but hast thou sterling sense ?  
 That which, like gold, may through the world  
 go forth,

And always pass for what 'tis truly worth ?  
 Whereas this genius, like a bill, must take  
 Only the value our opinions make.

' Men famed for wit, of dangerous talents vain,  
 Treat those of common parts with proud  
 disdain ;

The powers that wisdom would, improving,  
 hide,

They blaze abroad with inconsiderate pride ;  
 While yet but mere probationers for fame,  
 They seize the honour they should then  
 disclaim :

Honour so hurried to the light must fade,  
 The lasting laurels flourish in the shade.

' Genius is jealous ; I have heard of some  
 Who, if unnoticed, grew perversely dumb ;  
 Nay, different talents would their envy raise ;  
 Poets have sicken'd at a dancer's praise ;  
 And one, the happiest writer of his time,  
 Grew pale at hearing Reynolds was sublime ;  
 That Rutland's duchess wore a heavenly  
 smile—

And I, said he, neglected all the while !

' A waspish tribe are these, on gilded wings,  
 Humming their lays, and brandishing their  
 stings ;

And thus they move their friends and foes  
 among,

Prepared for soothing or satiric song.

' Hear me, my boy ; thou hast a virtuous  
 mind—

But be thy virtues of the sober kind ;

Be not a Quixote, ever up in arms

To give the guilty and the great alarms :

If never heeded, thy attack is vain ;

And if they heed thee, they'll attack again ;

Then too in striking at that heedless rate,  
 Thou in an instant may'st decide thy fate.

' Leave admonition—let the vicar give  
 Rules how the nobles of his flock should live :  
 Nor take that simple fancy to thy brain,  
 That thou canst cure the wicked and the vain.

' Our Pope, they say, once entertain'd the  
 whim,

Who fear'd not God should be afraid of him ;  
 But grant they fear'd him, was it further said,  
 That he reform'd the hearts he made afraid ?  
 Did Chartres mend ? Ward, Waters, and a  
 score

Of flagrant felons, with his floggings sore ?

Was Cibber silenced ? No : with vigour  
 bless'd,

And brazen front, half earnest, half in jest,  
 He dared the bard to battle, and was seen  
 In all his glory match'd with Pope and spleen ;  
 Himself he stripp'd, the harder blow to hit,  
 Then boldly match'd his ribaldry with wit ;  
 The poet's conquest Truth and Time proclaim,  
 But yet the battle hurt his peace and fame.

' Strive not too much for favour ; seem at  
 ease,

And rather pleased thyself, than bent to  
 please :

Upon thy lord with decent care attend,  
 But not too near ; thou canst not be a friend ;  
 And favourite be not, 'tis a dangerous post—  
 Is gain'd by labour, and by fortune lost :  
 Talents like thine may make a man approved,  
 But other talents trusted and beloved.  
 Look round, my son, and thou wilt early see  
 The kind of man thou art not form'd to be.

' The real favourites of the great are they  
 Who to their views and wants attention pay,  
 And pay it ever ; who, with all their skill,  
 Dive to the heart, and learn the secret will ;  
 If that be vicious, soon can they provide  
 The favourite ill, and o'er the soul preside ;  
 For vice is weakness, and the artful know  
 Their power increases as the passions grow ;  
 If indolent the pupil, hard their task ;  
 Such minds will ever for amusement ask ;  
 And great the labour : for a man to choose  
 Objects for one whom nothing can amuse ;  
 For ere those objects can the soul delight,  
 They must to joy the soul herself excite ;

Therefore it is, this patient, watchful kind  
With gentle friction stir the drowsy mind :  
Fix'd on their end, with caution they proceed,  
And sometimes give, and sometimes take the  
lead ;

Will now a hint convey, and then retire,  
And let the spark awake the lingering fire ;  
Or seek new joys and livelier pleasures bring,  
To give the jaded sense a quick'ning spring.

'These arts, indeed, my son must not pursue ;  
Nor must he quarrel with the tribe that do :  
It is not safe another's crimes to know,  
Nor is it wise our proper worth to show :—  
" My lord," you say, " engaged me for that  
worth ; "—

True, and preserve it ready to come forth :  
If question'd, fairly answer—and that done,  
Shrink back, be silent, and thy father's son ;  
For they who doubt thy talents scorn thy  
boast,

But they who grant them will dislike thee  
most :

Observe the prudent ; they in silence sit,  
Display no learning, and affect no wit ;  
They hazard nothing, nothing they assume,  
But know the useful art of *acting dumb*.

Yet to their eyes each varying look appears,  
And every word finds entrance at their ears.

'Thou art religion's advocate—take heed,  
Hurt not the cause, thy pleasure 'tis to plead ;  
With wine before thee, and with wits beside,  
Do not in strength of reas'ning powers confide ;  
What seems to thee convincing, certain, plain,  
They will deny, and dare thee to maintain ;  
And thus will triumph o'er thy eager youth,  
While thou wilt grieve for so disgracing truth.

'With pain I've seen, these wrangling wits  
among,

Faith's weak defenders, passionate and young ;  
Weak thou art not, yet not enough on guard,  
Where wit and humour keep their watch and  
ward :

Men gay and noisy will o'erwhelm thy sense,  
Then loudly laugh at Truth's and thy expense ;  
While the kind ladies will do all they can  
To check their mirth, and cry, "*The good  
young man !*"

'Prudence, my boy, forbids thee to com-  
mend

The cause or party of thy noble friend ;  
What are his praises worth, who must be  
known

To take a patron's maxims for his own ?

When ladies sing, or in thy presence play,  
Do not, dear John, in rapture melt away ;  
'Tis not thy part, there will be list'ners round,  
To cry *divine !* and dote upon the sound ;  
Remember too, that though the poor have  
ears,

They take not in the music of the spheres ;  
They must not feel the warble and the thrill,  
Or be dissolved in ecstasy at will ;  
Beside, 'tis freedom in a youth like thee  
To drop his awe, and deal in ecstasy !

'In silent ease, at least in silence, dine,  
Nor one opinion start of food or wine :  
Thou know'st that all the science thou canst  
boast

Is of thy father's simple boil'd and roast ;  
Nor always these ; he sometimes saved his  
cash,

By interlinear days of frugal hash :  
Wine hadst thou seldom ; wilt thou be so vain  
As to decide on claret or champagne ?

Dost thou from me derive this taste sublime,  
Who ordered port the dozen at a time ?

When (every glass held precious in our eyes)  
We judged the value by the bottle's size :

Then never merit for thy praise assume,  
Its worth well knows each servant in the room.

'Hard, boy, thy task, to steer thy way among  
That servile, supple, shrewd, insidious throng ;  
Who look upon thee as of doubtful race,

An interloper, one who wants a place :  
Freedom with these let thy free soul condemn,  
Nor with thy heart's concerns associate them.

'Of all be cautious—but be most afraid  
Of the pale charms that grace my lady's maid ;  
Of those sweet dimples, of that fraudulent eye,  
The frequent glance design'd for thee to spy ;  
The soft bewitching look, the fond bewailing  
sigh :

Let others frown and envy ; she the while  
(Insidious syren !) will demurely smile ;  
And for her gentle purpose, every day  
Inquire thy wants, and meet thee in thy way ;  
She has her blandishments, and though so  
weak,

Her person pleases, and her actions speak :  
At first her folly may her aim defeat ;  
But kindness shown at length will kindness  
meet :

Have some offended ? them will she disdain,  
And, for thy sake, contempt and pity feign ;  
She hates the vulgar, she admires to look  
On woods and groves, and dotes upon a book ;

Let her once see thee on her features dwell,  
And hear one sigh, then liberty farewell.

'But, John, remember we cannot maintain  
A poor, proud girl, extravagant and vain.

'Doubt much of friendship : shouldst thou  
find a friend

Pleased to advise thee, anxious to commend ;  
Should he the praises he had heard report,  
And confidence (in thee confiding) court ;  
Much of neglectful patrons should he say,  
And then exclaim—"How long must merit  
stay !"

Then show how high thy modest hopes may  
stretch,

And point to stations far beyond thy reach ;  
Let such designer, by thy conduct, see  
(Civil and cool) he makes no dupe of thee ;  
And he will quit thee, as a man too wise  
For him to ruin first, and then despise.

'Such are thy dangers ;—yet, if thou canst  
steer

Past all the perils, all the quicksands clear,  
Then may'st thou profit ; but if storms pre-  
vail,

If foes beset thee, if thy spirits fail,—  
No more of winds or waters be the sport,  
But in thy father's mansion find a port.'

Our poet read.—'It is in truth,' said he,  
'Correct in part, but what is *this* to me ?

I love a foolish Abigail ! in base  
And sordid office ! fear not such disgrace :  
Am I so blind ?' 'Or thou wouldst surely see  
That lady's fall, if she should stoop to thee !'  
'The cases differ.' 'True ! for what sur-  
prise

Could from thy marriage with the maid arise ?  
But through the island would the shame be  
spread,

Should the fair mistress deign with thee to  
wed.'

John saw not this ; and many a week had  
pass'd,

While the vain beauty held her victim fast ;  
The noble friend still condescension show'd,  
And, as before, with praises overflow'd ;  
But his grave lady took a silent view  
Of all that pass'd, and smiling, pitied too.

Cold grew the foggy morn, the day was  
brief,

Loose on the cherry hung the crimson leaf ;  
The dew dwelt ever on the herb ; the woods  
Roar'd with strong blasts, with mighty  
showers the floods :

All green was vanish'd, save of pine and yew,  
That still display'd their melancholy hue ;  
Save the green holly with its berries red,  
And the green moss that o'er the gravel spread.

To public views my lord must soon attend ;  
And soon the ladies—would they leave their  
friend ?

The time was fix'd—approach'd—was near—  
was come ;

The trying time that fill'd his soul with gloom :  
Thoughtful our poet in the morning rose,  
And cried, 'One hour my fortune will disclose ;  
Terrific hour ! from thee have I to date  
Life's loftier views, or my degraded state ;  
For now to be what I have been before  
Is so to fall, that I can rise no more.'

The morning meal was past, and all around  
The mansion rang with each discordant sound ;  
Haste was in every foot, and every look  
The traveller's joy for London-journey spoke :  
Not so our youth ; whose feelings, at the noise  
Of preparation, had no touch of joys ;  
He pensive stood, and saw each carriage  
drawn,

With lackeys mounted, ready on the lawn :  
The ladies came ; and John in terror threw  
One painful glance, and then his eyes with-  
drew ;

Not with such speed, but he in other eyes  
With anguish read—'I pity but despise—  
Unhappy boy ! presumptuous scribbler !—  
you

To dream such dreams !—be sober, and  
adieu !'

Then came the noble friend—'And will my  
lord

Vouchsafe no comfort ? drop no soothing  
word ?

Yes, he must speak : ' he speaks, 'My good  
young friend,

You know my views ; upon my care depend ;  
My hearty thanks to your good father pay,  
And be a student.—Harry, drive away.'

Stillness reign'd all around ; of late so full  
The busy scene, deserted now and dull :  
Stern is his nature who forbears to feel  
Gloom o'er his spirits on such trials steal ;  
Most keenly felt our poet as he went  
From room to room without a fix'd intent ;  
'And here,' he thought, 'I was caress'd ;  
admired

Were here my songs ; she smiled, and I  
aspired :

The change how grievous !' As he mused,  
a dame

Busy and peevish to her duties came ;  
Aside the tables and the chairs she drew,  
And sang and mutter'd in the poet's view :—  
' This was her fortune ; here they leave the  
poor ;

Enjoy themselves, and think of us no more ;  
I had a promise '— here his pride and shame  
Urged him to fly from this familiar dame ;  
He gave one farewell look, and by a coach  
Reach'd his own mansion at the night's  
approach.

His father met him with an anxious air,  
Heard his sad tale, and check'd what seem'd  
despair ;

Hope was in him corrected, but alive ;  
My lord would something for a friend con-  
trive ;

His word was pledged ; our hero's feverish  
mind

Admitted this, and half his grief resign'd :  
But when three months had fled, and every  
day

Drew from the sickening hopes their strength  
away,

The youth became abstracted, pensive, dull ;  
He utter'd nothing, though his heart was full ;  
Teased by inquiring words and anxious looks,  
And all forgetful of his muse and books ;

Awake he mourn'd, but in his sleep perceived  
A lovely vision that his pain relieved :  
His soul transported, hail'd the happy seat,  
Where once his pleasure was so pure and  
sweet ;

Where joys departed came in blissful view,  
Till reason waked, and not a joy he knew.

Questions now vex'd his spirit, most from  
those

Who are called friends, because they are not  
foes :

' John !' they would say ; he, starting,  
turn'd around ;

' John !' there was something shocking in  
the sound ;

Ill brook'd he then the pert familiar phrase,  
The untaught freedom, and th' inquiring gaze :  
Much was his temper touch'd, his spleen  
provoked,

When ask'd how ladies talk'd, or walk'd, or  
look'd ?

' What said my lord of politics ? how spent  
He there his time ? and was he glad he went ?'

At length a letter came, both cool and brief,  
But still it gave the burthen'd heart relief :  
Though not inspired by lofty hopes, the youth  
Placed much reliance on Lord Frederick's  
truth ;

Summon'd to town, he thought the visit one  
Where something fair and friendly would be  
done ;

Although he judg'd not, as before his fall,  
When all was love and promise at the hall.

Arrived in town, he early sought to know  
The fate such dubious friendship would  
bestow ;

At a tall building trembling he appear'd,  
And his low rap was indistinctly heard ;  
A well-known servant came—' A while,'  
said he,

' Be pleased to wait ; my lord has company.'  
Alone our hero sat ; the news in hand,

Which though he read, he could not under-  
stand :

Cold was the day ; in days so cold as these  
There needs a fire, where minds and bodies  
freeze ;

The vast and echoing room, the polish'd grate,  
The crimson chairs, the sideboard with its  
plate ;

The splendid sofa, which, though made for  
rest,

He then had thought it freedom to have  
press'd ;

The shining tables, curiously inlaid,  
Were all in comfortless proud style display'd ;  
And to the troubled feelings terror gave,  
That made the once-dear friend, the sick'n'g  
slave.

' Was he forgotten ?' Thrice upon his ear  
Struck the loud clock, yet no relief was near ;  
Each rattling carriage, and each thundering  
stroke

On the loud door, the dream of fancy broke ;  
Oft as a servant chanced the way to come,

' Brings he a message ?' no ! he pass'd the  
room :

At length 'tis certain ; ' Sir, you will attend  
At twelve on Thursday !' Thus the day had  
end.

Vex'd by these tedious hours of needless  
pain,

John left the noble mansion with disdain ;  
For there was something in that still, cold  
place,

That seem'd to threaten and portend disgrace.

Punctual again the modest rap declared  
The youth attended ; then was all prepared :  
For the same servant, by his lord's command,  
A paper offer'd to his trembling hand :  
'No more !' he cried ; ' disdains he to afford  
One kind expression, one consoling word ? '

With troubled spirit he began to read  
That ' In the church my lord could not  
succeed ; '

Who had ' to peers of either kind applied,  
And was with dignity and grace denied ;  
While his own livings were by men possess'd,  
Not likely in their chancels yet to rest ;  
And therefore, all things weigh'd (as he, my  
lord,  
Had done maturely, and he pledged his  
word),

Wisdom it seem'd for John to turn his view  
To busier scenes, and bid the church adieu ! '

Here grieved the youth ; he felt his father's  
pride

Must with his own be shock'd and mortified ;  
But when he found his future comforts placed  
Where he, alas ! conceived himself disgraced —  
In some appointment on the London quays,  
He bade farewell to honour and to ease ;  
His spirit fell, and, from that hour assured  
How vain his dreams, he suffer'd and was  
cured.

Our poet hurried on, with wish to fly  
From all mankind, to be conceal'd, and die.  
Alas ! what hopes, what high romantic views  
Did that one visit to the soul infuse,  
Which cherish'd with such love, 'twas worse  
than death to lose !

Still he would strive, though painful was the  
strife,

To walk in this appointed road of life ;  
On these low duties duteous he would wait,  
And patient bear the anguish of his fate.  
Thanks to the patron, but of coldest kind,  
Express'd the sadness of the poet's mind ;  
Whose heavy hours were pass'd with busy  
men,

In the dull practice of th' official pen ;  
Who to superiors must in time impart  
(The custom this) his progress in their art :  
But so had grief on his perception wrought,  
That all unheeded were the duties taught ;  
No answers gave he when his trial came,  
Silent he stood, but suffering without shame ;  
And they observed that words severe or kind  
Made no impression on his wounded mind ;

For all perceived from whence his failure rose,  
Some grief whose cause he deign'd not to  
disclose.

A soul averse from scenes and works so new,  
Fear ever shrinking from the vulgar crew ;  
Distaste for each mechanic law and rule,  
Thoughts of past honour and a patron cool ;  
A grieving parent, and a feeling mind,  
Timid and ardent, tender and refined :  
These all with mighty force the youth assail'd,  
Till his soul fainted, and his reason fail'd :  
When this was known, and some debate arose  
How they who saw it should the fact disclose,  
He found their purpose, and in terror fled  
From unseen kindness, with mistaken dread.

Meantime the parent was distress'd to find  
His son no longer for a priest design'd ;  
But still he gain'd some comfort by the news  
Of John's promotion, though with humbler  
views :

For he conceived that in no distant time  
The boy would learn to scramble and to  
climb ;

He little thought a son, his hope and pride,  
His favour'd boy, was now a home denied :  
Yes ! while the parent was intent to trace  
How men in office climb from place to place,  
By day, by night, o'er moor and heath and  
hill,

Roved the sad youth, with ever-changing will,  
Of every aid bereft, exposed to every ill.

Thus as he sate, absorb'd in all the care  
And all the hope that anxious fathers share,  
A friend abruptly to his presence brought,  
With trembling hand, the subject of his  
thought ;

Whom he had found afflicted and subdued  
By hunger, sorrow, cold, and solitude.

Silent he enter'd the forgotten room,  
As ghostly forms may be conceived to come ;  
With sorrow-shrunken face and hair upright,  
He look'd dismay, neglect, despair, affright ;  
But, dead to comfort, and on misery thrown,  
His parent's loss he felt not, nor his own.

The good man, struck with horror, cried  
aloud,

And drew around him an astonish'd crowd ;  
The sons and servants to the father ran,  
To share the feelings of the grieved old man.

' Our brother, speak ! ' they all exclaim'd ;  
' explain

Thy grief, thy suffering : '—but they ask'd  
in vain :

The friend told all he knew ; and all was known,

Save the sad causes whence the ills had grown :  
But, if obscure the cause, they all agreed  
From rest and kindness must the cure proceed :

And he was cured ; for quiet, love, and care,  
Strove with the gloom, and broke on the despair ;

Yet slow their progress, and, as vapours move  
Dense and reluctant from the wintry grove ;  
All is confusion till the morning light  
Gives the dim scene obscurely to the sight ;  
More and yet more defined the trunks appear,  
Till the wild prospect stands distinct and clear ;—

So the dark mind of our young poet grew  
Clear and sedate ; the dreadful mist withdrew ;

And he resembled that bleak wintry scene,  
Sad, though unclouded ; dismal, though serene.

At times he utter'd, ' What a dream was mine !

And what a prospect ! glorious and divine !  
Oh ! in that room, and on that night to see

Those looks, that sweetness beaming all on me ;

That syren-flattery—and to send me then,  
Hope-raised and soften'd, to those heartless men ;

That dark-brow'd stern director, pleas'd to show

Knowledge of subjects, I disdain'd to know ;  
Cold and controlling—but 'tis gone, 'tis past ;  
I had my trial, and have peace at last.

Now grew the youth resign'd ; he bade adieu

To all that hope, to all that fancy drew ;  
His frame was languid, and the hectic heat  
Flush'd on his pallid face, and countless beat  
The quick'ning pulse, and faint the limbs that bore

The slender form that soon would breathe no more.

Then hope of holy kind the soul sustain'd,  
And not a lingering thought of earth remain'd ;  
Now Heaven had all, and he could smile at love,

And the wild sallies of his youth reprove ;  
Then could he dwell upon the tempting days  
The proud aspiring thought, the partial praise ;

Victorious now, his worldly views were closed,  
And on the bed of death the youth repos'd.

The father grieved—but as the poet's heart  
Was all unfitted for his earthly part ;  
As, he conceived, some other haughty fair  
Would, had he lived, have led him to despair ;  
As, with this fear, the silent grave shut out  
All feverish hope, and all tormenting doubt ;  
While the strong faith the pious youth possess'd,

His hopes enlivening, gave his sorrows rest ;  
Soothed by these thoughts, he felt a mournful joy

For his aspiring and devoted boy.

Meantime the news through various channels spread,

The youth, once favour'd with such praise,  
was dead :

' Emma,' the lady cried, ' my words attend,  
Your syren-smiles have kill'd your humble friend ;

The hope you rais'd can now delude no more,  
Nor charms, that once inspir'd, can now restore.'

Faint was the flush of anger and of shame,  
That o'er the cheek of conscious beauty came :  
' You censure not,' she said, ' the sun's bright rays,

When fools imprudent dare the dangerous gaze ;

And should a stripling look till he were blind,  
You would not justly call the light unkind :

But is he dead ? and am I to suppose  
The power of poison in such looks as those ?'  
She spoke, and, pointing to the mirror, cast  
A pleas'd gay glance, and curtsied as she pass'd.

My lord, to whom the poet's fate was told,  
Was much affected, for a man so cold :

' Dead !' said his lordship, ' run distracted, mad !

Upon my soul I'm sorry for the lad ;  
And now, no doubt, th' obliging world will say  
That my harsh usage help'd him on his way :  
What ! I suppose, I should have nursed his muse,

And with champagne have brighten'd up his views ;

Then had he made me famed my whole life long,

And stunn'd my ears with gratitude and song.

Still should the father hear that I regret  
Our joint misfortune—Yes! I'll not forget.'—

Thus they :—The father to his grave convey'd

The son he loved, and his last duties paid.

'There lies my boy,' he cried, 'of care bereft,

And, Heav'n be praised, I've not a genius left:

No one among ye, sons! is doom'd to live  
On high-raised hopes of what the great may give;

None, with exalted views and fortunes mean,  
To die in anguish, or to live in spleen :  
Your pious brother soon escaped the strife  
Of such contention, but it cost his life ;  
You then, my sons, upon yourselves depend,  
And in your own exertions find the friend.'

## TALE VI: THE FRANK COURTSHIP

Yes, faith, it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please you'; but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act ii, Scene 1.

He cannot flatter, he!

An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth.

*King Lear*, Act ii, Scene 2.

God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, and you lisp and you nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.

*Hamlet*, Act iii, Scene 1.

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true? Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act iii, Scene 1.

GRAVE Jonas Kindred, Sybil Kindred's sire,  
Was six feet high, and look'd six inches higher;  
Erect, morose, determined, solemn, slow,  
Who knew the man, could never cease to know;

His faithful spouse, when Jonas was not by,  
Had a firm presence and a steady eye;  
But with her husband dropp'd her look and tone,

And Jonas ruled unquestion'd and alone.

He read, and oft would quote the sacred words,

How pious husbands of their wives were lords;

Sarah called Abraham lord! and who could be,

So Jonas thought, a greater man than he?  
Himself he view'd with undisguised respect,  
And never pardon'd freedom or neglect.

They had one daughter, and this favourite child

Had oft the father of his spleen beguiled;  
Soothed by attention from her early years,  
She gain'd all wishes by her smiles or tears:  
But Sybil then was in that playful time,  
When contradiction is not held a crime;  
When parents yield their children idle praise  
For faults corrected in their after days.

Peace in the sober house of Jonas dwelt,  
Where each his duty and his station felt:  
Yet not that peace some favour'd mortals find,  
In equal views and harmony of mind;  
Not the soft peace that blesses those who love,  
Where all with one consent in union move;  
But it was that which one superior will  
Commands, by making all inferiors still;  
Who bids all murmurs, all objections cease,  
And with imperious voice announces—Peace!

They were, to wit, a remnant of that crew,  
Who, as their foes maintain, their sovereign slew;

An independent race, precise, correct,  
Who ever married in the kindred sect:  
No son or daughter of their order wed  
A friend to England's king who lost his head;  
Cromwell was still their saint, and when they met,

They mourn'd that saints\* were not our rulers yet.

Fix'd were their habits; they arose betimes,  
Then pray'd their hour, and sang their party-rhymes:

Their meals were plenteous, regular, and plain;  
The trade of Jonas brought him constant gain;

\* This appellation is here not used ironically, nor with malignity; but it is taken merely to designate a morosely devout people, with peculiar austerity of manners.



Vender of hops and malt, of coals and corn—  
And, like his father, he was merchant born :  
Neat was their house ; each table, chair, and  
stool,

Stood in its place, or moving moved by rule ;  
No lively print or picture graced the room ;  
A plain brown paper lent its decent gloom ;  
But here the eye, in glancing round, survey'd  
A small recess that seem'd for china made ;  
Such pleasing pictures seem'd this pencill'd  
ware,

That few would search for nobler objects  
there—

Yet, turn'd by chosen friends, and there  
appear'd

His stern, strong features, whom they all  
revered ;

For there in lofty air was seen to stand  
The bold protector of the conquer'd land ;  
Drawn in that look with which he wept and  
swore,

Turn'd out the members, and made fast the  
door,

Ridding the house of every knave and drone,  
Forced, though it grieved his soul, to rule  
alone.

The stern still smile each friend approving  
gave,

Then turn'd the view, and all again were  
grave.

There stood a clock, though small the  
owner's need,

For habit told when all things should proceed ;  
Few their amusements, but when friends  
appear'd,

They with the world's distress their spirits  
cheer'd ;

The nation's guilt, that would not long endure  
The reign of men so modest and so pure :  
Their town was large, and seldom pass'd a day  
But some had fail'd, and others gone astray ;  
Clerks had absconded, wives eloped, girls flown  
To Greta-Green, or sons rebellious grown ;  
Quarrels and fires arose ;—and it was plain  
The times were bad ; the saints had ceased  
to reign !

A few yet lived to languish and to mourn  
For good old manners never to return.

Jonas had sisters, and of these was one  
Who lost a husband and an only son :  
Twelve months her sables she in sorrow wore,  
And mourn'd so long that she could mourn  
no more.

Distant from Jonas, and from all her race,  
She now resided in a lively place ;  
There, by the sect unseen, at whist she play'd,  
Nor was of churchmen or their church afraid :  
If much of this the graver brother heard,  
He something censured, but he little fear'd ;  
He knew her rich and frugal ; for the rest,  
He felt no care, or, if he felt, suppress'd :  
Nor for companion when she ask'd her niece,  
Had he suspicions that disturb'd his peace ;  
Frugal and rich, these virtues as a charm  
Preserved the thoughtful man from all alarm ;  
An infant yet, she soon would home return,  
Nor stay the manners of the world to learn ;  
Meantime his boys would all his care engross,  
And be his comforts if he felt the loss.

Thesprightly Sybil, pleased and unconfined,  
Felt the pure pleasure of the op'ning mind :  
All here was gay and cheerful—all at home  
Unvaried quiet and unruffled gloom :  
There were no changes, and amusements few ;  
Here, all was varied, wonderful, and new ;  
There were plain meals, plain dresses, and  
grave looks—

Here, gay companions and amusing books ;  
And the young beauty soon began to taste  
The light vocations of the scene she graced.

A man of business feels it as a crime  
On calls domestic to consume his time ;  
Yet this grave man had not so cold a heart,  
But with his daughter he was grieved to part :  
And he demanded that in every year  
The aunt and niece should at his house appear.

' Yes ! we must go, my child, and by our  
dress

A grave conformity of mind express ;  
Must sing at meeting, and from cards refrain,  
The more t' enjoy when we return again.'

Thus spake the aunt, and the discerning  
child

Was pleased to learn how fathers are beguiled.  
Her artful part the young dissembler took,  
And from the matron caught th' approving  
look :

When thrice the friends had met, excuse was  
sent

For more delay, and Jonas was content ;  
Till a tall maiden by her sire was seen,  
In all the bloom and beauty of sixteen ;  
He gazed admiring ;—she, with visage prim,  
Glanced an arch look of gravity on him ;  
For she was gay at heart, but wore disguise,  
And stood a vestal in her father's eyes :

Pure, pensive, simple, sad ; the damsel's heart,

When Jonas praised, reproved her for the part ;

For Sybil, fond of pleasure, gay and light,  
Had still a secret bias to the right ;  
Vain as she was—and flattery made her vain—

Her simulation gave her bosom pain.

Again return'd, the matron and the niece  
Found the late quiet gave their joy increase ;  
The aunt infirm, no more her visits paid,  
But still with her sojourn'd the favourite maid.

Letters were sent when franks could be procured,

And when they could not, silence was endured ;  
All were in health, and if they older grew,  
It seem'd a fact that none among them knew ;  
The aunt and niece still led a pleasant life,  
And quiet days had Jonas and his wife.

Near him a widow dwelt of worthy fame,  
Like his her manners, and her creed the same ;  
The wealth her husband left, her care retain'd  
For one tall youth, and widow she remain'd ;  
His love respectful, all her care repaid,  
Her wishes watch'd, and her commands obey'd.

Sober he was and grave from early youth,  
Mindful of forms, but more intent on truth ;  
In a light drab he uniformly dress'd,  
And look serene th' unruffled mind express'd ;  
A hat with ample verge his brows o'erspread,  
And his brown locks curl'd graceful on his head ;

Yet might observers in his speaking eye  
Some observation, some acuteness spy ;  
The friendly thought it keen, the treacherous deem'd it sly ;

Yet not a crime could foe or friend detect,  
His actions all were, like his speech, correct ;  
And they who jest on a mind so sound,  
Upon his virtues must their laughter found ;  
Chaste, sober, solemn, and devout they named  
Him who was thus, and not of this ashamed.

Such were the virtues Jonas found in one  
In whom he warmly wish'd to find a son :  
Three years had pass'd since he had Sybil seen ;

But she was doubtless what she once had been,  
Lovely and mild, obedient and discreet ;  
The pair must love whenever they should meet ;

Then ere the widow or her son should choose  
Some happier maid, he would explain his views ;

Now she, like him, was politic and shrewd,  
With strong desire of lawful gain embued ;  
To all he said, she bow'd with much respect,  
Pleased to comply, yet seeming to reject ;  
Cool and yet eager, each admired the strength  
Of the opponent, and agreed at length :  
As a drawn battle shows to each a force,  
Powerful as his, he honours it of course ;  
So in these neighbours, each the power discern'd,

And gave the praise that was to each return'd.  
Jonas now ask'd his daughter—and the aunt,  
Though loth to lose her, was obliged to grant :—

But would not Sybil to the matron cling,  
And fear to leave the shelter of her wing ?  
No ! in the young there lives a love of change,  
And to the easy they prefer the strange !  
Then too the joys she once pursued with zeal,  
From whist and visits sprung, she ceased to feel ;

When with the matrons Sybil first sat down,  
To cut for partners and to stake her crown,  
This to the youthful maid preferment seem'd,  
Who thought what woman she was then esteem'd ;

But in few years, when she perceived, indeed,  
The real woman to the girl succeed,  
No longer tricks and honours fill'd her mind,  
But other feelings, not so well defined ;  
She then reluctant grew, and thought it hard,  
To sit and ponder o'er an ugly card ;  
Rather the nut-tree shade the nymph preferred,

Pleased with the pensive gloom and evening bird ;

Thither, from company retired, she took  
The silent walk, or read the fav'rite book.

The father's letter, sudden, short, and kind,  
Awaked her wonder, and disturb'd her mind ;  
She found new dreams upon her fancy seize,  
Wild roving thoughts and endless reveries :  
The parting came ;—and when the aunt perceived

The tears of Sybil, and how much she grieved—

To love for her that tender grief she laid,  
That various, soft, contending passions made.

When Sybil rested in her father's arms,  
His pride exulted in a daughter's charms ;

A maid accomplish'd he was pleased to find,  
Nor seem'd the form more lovely than the  
mind :

But when the fit of pride and fondness fled,  
He saw his judgment by his hopes misled ;  
High were the lady's spirits, far more free  
Her mode of speaking than a maid's should be ;  
Too much, as Jonas thought, she seem'd to  
know,

And all her knowledge was disposed to show ;  
' Too gay her dress, like theirs who idly dote  
On a young coxcomb, or a coxcomb's coat ;  
In foolish spirits when our friends appear,  
And vainly grave when not a man is near.'

Thus Jonas, adding to his sorrow blame,  
And terms disdainful to his sister's name :—  
' The sinful wretch has by her arts defiled  
The ductile spirit of my darling child.'

' The maid is virtuous,' said the dame—  
Quoth he,

' Let her give proof, by acting virtuously :  
Is it in gaping when the elders pray ?  
In reading nonsense half a summer's day ?  
In those mock forms that she delights to trace,  
Or her loud laughs in Hezekiah's face ?  
She—O Susannah !—to the world belongs ;  
She loves the follies of its idle throngs,  
And reads soft tales of love, and sings love's  
soft'ning songs.

But, as our friend is yet delay'd in town,  
We must prepare her till the youth comes  
down ;  
You shall advise the maiden ; I will threaten ;  
Her fears and hopes may yield us comfort  
yet.'

Now the grave father took the lass aside,  
Demanding sternly, ' Wilt thou be a bride ?'  
She answer'd, calling up an air sedate,  
' I have not vow'd against the holy state.'

' No folly, Sybil,' said the parent ; ' know  
What to their parents virtuous maidens owe :  
A worthy, wealthy youth, whom I approve,  
Must thou prepare to honour and to love.  
Formal to thee his air and dress may seem,  
But the good youth is worthy of esteem ;  
Shouldst thou with rudeness treat him ; of  
disdain

Should he with justice or of slight complain,  
Or of one taunting speech give certain proof,  
Girl ! I reject thee from my sober roof.'

' My aunt,' said Sybil, ' will with pride  
protect

One whom a father can for this reject ;

Nor shall a formal, rigid, soul-less boy  
My manners alter, or my views destroy !'

Jonas then lifted up his hands on high,  
And utt'ring something 'twixt a groan and  
sigh,

Left the determined maid, her doubtful  
mother by.

' Hear me,' she said ; ' incline thy heart,  
my child,

And fix thy fancy on a man so mild :

Thy father, Sybil, never could be moved  
By one who loved him, or by one he loved.  
Union like ours is but a bargain made  
By slave and tyrant—he will be obey'd ;  
Then calls the quiet, comfort—but thy youth  
Is mild by nature, and as frank as truth.'

' But will he love ?' said Sybil ; ' I am told  
That these mild creatures are by nature cold.'

' Alas !' the matron answer'd, ' much I dread  
That dangerous love by which the young are  
led !

That love is earthy ; you the creature prize,  
And trust your feelings and believe your eyes :  
Can eyes and feelings inward worth descry ?  
No ! my fair daughter, on our choice rely !  
Your love, like that display'd upon the stage,  
Indulged is folly, and opposed is rage ;—  
More prudent love our sober couples show,  
All that to mortal beings, mortals owe ;  
All flesh is grass—before you give a heart,  
Remember, Sybil, that in death you part ;  
And should your husband die before your love,  
What needless anguish must a widow prove !  
No ! my fair child, let all such visions cease ;  
Yield but esteem, and only try for peace.'

' I must be loved,' said Sybil ; ' I must see  
The man in terrors who aspires to me ;  
At my forbidding frown, his heart must ache,  
His tongue must falter, and his frame must  
shake :

And if I grant him at my feet to kneel,  
What trembling, fearful pleasure must he feel ;  
Nay, such the raptures that my smiles inspire,  
That reason's self must for a time retire.'

' Alas ! for good Josiah,' said the dame,  
' These wicked thoughts would fill his soul with  
shame ;

He kneel and tremble at a thing of dust !  
He cannot, child :—the child replied, ' He  
must.'

They ceased : the matron left her with a  
frown ;

So Jonas met her when the youth came down :

'Behold,' said he, 'thy future spouse attends;  
Receive him, daughter, as the best of friends;  
Observe, respect him—humble be each word,  
That welcomes home thy husband and thy  
lord.'

Forewarn'd, thought Sybil, with a bitter  
smile,

I shall prepare my manner and my style.

Ere yet Josiah enter'd on his task,  
The father met him—'Deign to wear a mask  
A few dull days, Josiah—but a few—  
It is our duty, and the sex's due;  
I wore it once, and every grateful wife  
Repay it with obedience through her life:  
Have no regard to Sybil's dress, have none  
To her pert language, to her flippant tone:  
Henceforward thou shalt rule unquestioned  
and alone;

And she thy pleasure in thy looks shall seek—  
How she shall dress, and whether she may  
speak.'

A sober smile return'd the youth, and said,  
'Can I cause fear, who am myself afraid?'  
Sybil, meantime, sat thoughtful in her room,  
And often wonder'd—'Will the creature  
come?

Nothing shall tempt, shall force me to bestow  
My hand upon him—yet I wish to know.'

The door unclosed, and she beheld her sire  
Lead in the youth, then hasten to retire;  
'Daughter, my friend—my daughter, friend'  
—he cried,

And gave a meaning look, and stepp'd aside;  
That look contain'd a mingled threat and  
prayer,

'Do take him, child—offend him, if you dare.'

The couple gazed—were silent, and the maid  
Look'd in his face, to make the man afraid;  
The man, unmoved, upon the maiden cast  
A steady view—so salutation pass'd:  
But in this instant Sybil's eye had seen  
The tall fair person, and the still staid mien;  
The glow that temp'rance o'er the cheek had  
spread,

Where the soft down half veil'd the purest  
red;

And the serene deportment that proclaim'd  
A heart unspotted, and a life unblamed:  
But then with these she saw attire too plain,  
The pale brown coat, though worn without  
a stain;

The formal air, and something of the pride  
That indicates the wealth it seems to hide;

And looks that were not, she conceived,  
exempt

From a proud pity, or a sly contempt.

Josiah's eyes had their employment too,  
Engaged and soften'd by so bright a view;  
A fair and meaning face, an eye of fire,  
That cheek'd the bold, and made the free  
retire:

But then with these he mark'd the studied  
dress

And lofty air, that scorn or pride express;  
With that insidious look, that seem'd to hide  
In an affected smile the scorn and pride;  
And if his mind the virgin's meaning caught,  
He saw a foe with treacherous purpose  
fraught—

Captive the heart to take, and to reject it  
caught.

Silent they sate—thought Sybil, that he  
seeks

Something, no doubt; I wonder if he speaks:  
Scarcely she wonder'd, when these accents fell  
Slow in her ear—'Fair maiden, art thou well?  
'Art thou physician?' she replied; 'my  
hand,

My pulse, at least, shall be at thy command.'

She said—and saw, surprised, Josiah kneel,  
And gave his lips the offer'd pulse to feel;  
The rosy colour rising in her cheek,  
Seem'd that surprise unmix'd with wrath to  
speak;

Then sternness she assumed, and—'Doctor,  
tell,

Thy words cannot alarm me—am I well?'

'Thou art,' said he; 'and yet thy dress  
so light,

I do conceive, some danger must excite:'

'In whom?' said Sybil, with a look demure:

'In more,' said he, 'than I expect to cure.

I, in thy light luxuriant robe, behold  
Want and excess, abounding and yet cold;  
Here needed, there display'd, in many a  
wanton fold:

Both health and beauty, learned authors  
show,

From a just medium in our clothing flow.'

'Proceed, good doctor; if so great my need,  
What is thy fee? Good doctor! pray pro-  
ceed.'

'Large is my fee, fair lady, but I take  
None till some progress in my cure I make:  
Thou hast disease, fair maiden; thou art vain;  
Within that face sit insult and disdain;

Thou art enamour'd of thyself ; my art  
Can see the naughty malice of thy heart :  
With a strong pleasure would thy bosom  
move,

Were I to own thy power, and ask thy love ;  
And such thy beauty, damsel, that I might,  
But for thy pride, feel danger in thy sight,  
And lose my present peace in dreams of vain  
delight.'

'And can thy patients,' said the nymph,  
'endure

Physic like this ? and will it work a cure ?'

'Such is my hope, fair damsel ; thou, I find,  
Hast the true tokens of a noble mind ;  
And such thy beauty, damsel, that I might,  
But for thy pride, feel danger in thy sight,  
And lose my present peace in dreams of vain  
delight.'

Could it the least of nature's pains remove ?  
Could it for errors, follies, sins atone,  
Or give thee comfort, thoughtful and alone ?  
It has, believe me, maid, no power to charm  
Thy soul from sorrow, or thy flesh from harm :  
Turn then, fair creature, from a world of  
sin,

And seek the jewel happiness within.'

'Speak'st thou at meeting ?' said the  
nymph ; 'thy speech

Is that of mortal very prone to teach ;  
But wouldst thou, doctor, from the patient  
learn

Thine own disease ?—The cure is thy con-  
cern.'

'Yea, with good will.'—'Then know, 'tis thy  
complaint,

That, for a sinner, thou'rt too much a saint ;  
Hast too much show of the sedate and pure,  
And without cause art formal and demure :  
This makes a man unsocial, unpolite ;  
Odious when wrong, and insolent if right.  
Thou may'st be good, but why should good-  
ness be

Wrapt in a garb of such formality ?

Thy person well might please a damsel's eye,  
In decent habit with a scarlet dye ;  
But, jest apart—what virtue canst thou trace  
In that broad brim that hides thy sober face ?  
Does that long-skirted drab, that over-nice  
And formal clothing, prove a scorn of vice ?  
Then for thine accent—what in sound can be  
So void of grace as dull monotony ?

Love has a thousand varied notes to move  
The human heart ;—thou may'st not speak  
of love

Till thou hast cast thy formal ways aside,  
And those becoming youth and nature tried  
Not till exterior freedom, spirit, ease,  
Prove it thy study and delight to please ;  
Not till these follies meet thy just disdain,  
While yet thy virtues and thy worth remain.'

'This is severe !—Oh ! maiden, wilt not  
thou

Something for habits, manners, modes,  
allow ?'—

'Yes ! but allowing much, I much require,  
In my behalf, for manners, modes, attire !'

'True, lovely Sybil ; and, this point agreed,  
Let me to those of greater weight proceed :  
Thy father !'—'Nay,' she quickly interposed,  
'Good doctor, here our conference is closed !'

Then left the youth, who, lost in his retreat,  
Pass'd the good matron on her garden-seat ;  
His looks were troubled, and his air, once mild  
And calm, was hurried :—'My audacious  
child !'

Exclaim'd the dame, 'I read what she has  
done

In thy displeasure—Ah ! the thoughtless one ;  
But yet, Josiah, to my stern good man  
Speak of the maid as mildly as you can :  
Can you not seem to woo a little while  
The daughter's will, the father to beguile ?  
So that his wrath in time may wear away ;  
Will you preserve our peace, Josiah ? say.'

'Yes ! my good neighbour,' said the gentle  
youth,

'Rely securely on my care and truth ;  
And should thy comfort with my efforts cease,  
And only then—perpetual is thy peace.'

The dame had doubts : she well his virtues  
knew,

His deeds were friendly, and his words were  
true ;

'But to address this vixen is a task  
He is ashamed to take, and I to ask.'  
Soon as the father from Josiah learn'd  
What pass'd with Sybil, he the truth discern'd.  
'He loves,' the man exclaim'd, 'he loves,' 'tis  
plain,

The thoughtless girl, and shall he love in vain ?  
She may be stubborn, but she shall be tried,  
Born as she is of wilfulness and pride.'

With anger fraught, but willing to persuade,  
The wrathful father met the smiling maid :

'Sybil,' said he, 'I long, and yet I dread  
To know thy conduct—hath Josiah fled?  
And, grieved and fretted by thy scornful air,  
For his lost peace betaken him to prayer?  
Couldst thou his pure and modest mind  
distress,  
By vile remarks upon his speech, address,  
Attire, and voice?'—'All this I must confess.'—  
'Unhappy child! what labour will it cost  
To win him back!'—'I do not think him lost.'  
'Courts he then, trifter! insult and disdain?'—  
'No: but from these he courts me to refrain.'

'Then hear me, Sybil—should Josiah leave  
Thy father's house?'—'My father's child  
would grieve.'  
'That is of grace, and if he come again  
To speak of love?'—'I might from grief  
refrain.'—  
'Then wilt thou, daughter, our design  
embrace?'—  
'Can I resist it, if it be of grace?'  
'Dear child! in three plain words thy mind  
express—  
Wilt thou have this good youth?' 'Dear  
father! yes.'

## TALE VII. THE WIDOW'S TALE

Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;  
But either it was different in blood, . . .  
Or else misgraffed in respect of years, . . .  
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends; . . .  
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,  
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it.  
*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act i, Scene 1.*

Oh! thou didst then ne'er love so heartily  
If thou remember'st not the slightest folly  
That ever love did make thee run into.  
*As You Like It, Act ii, Scene 4.*

Cry the man mercy; love him, take his offer.  
*As You Like It, Act iii, Scene 5.*

To farmer Moss, in Langar Vale, came down  
His only daughter, from her school in town;  
A tender, timid maid! who knew not how  
To pass a pig-sty, or to face a cow:  
Smiling she came, with petty talents graced,  
A fair complexion, and a slender waist.

Used to spare meals, disposed in manner  
pure,

Her father's kitchen she could ill endure;  
Where by the steaming beef he hungry sat,  
And laid at once a pound upon his plate;  
Hot from the field, her eager brother seized  
An equal part, and hunger's rage appeased;  
The air, surcharged with moisture, flagg'd  
around,

And the offended damsel sigh'd and frown'd;  
The swelling fat in lumps conglomerate laid,  
And fancy's sickness seized the loathing  
maid:

But when the men beside their station took,  
The maidens with them, and with these the  
cook;

When one huge wooden bowl before them  
stood,

Fill'd with huge balls of farinaceous food;  
With bacon, mass saline, where never lean  
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen;  
When from a single horn the party drew  
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;  
When the coarse cloth she saw, with many  
a stain,

Soil'd by rude hinds who cut and came again—  
She could not breathe; but, with a heavy sigh,  
Rein'd the fair neck, and shut th' offended  
eye;

She minced the sanguine flesh in frustums fine,  
And wonder'd much to see the creatures dine:  
When she resolved her father's heart to move,  
If hearts of farmers were alive to love.

She now entreated by herself to sit  
In the small parlour, if papa thought fit,  
And there to dine, to read, to work alone:—  
'No!' said the farmer, in an angry tone;  
'These are your school-taught airs; your  
mother's pride

Would send you there; but I am now your  
guide.—

Arise betimes, our early meal prepare,  
And this despatch'd, let business be your care;  
Look to the lasses, let there not be one  
Who lacks attention, till her tasks be done;  
In every household work your portion take,  
And what you make not, see that others make:

At leisure times attend the wheel, and see  
The whit'ning web be sprinkled on the Lea;  
When thus employ'd, should our young  
neighbour view

An useful lass, you may have more to do.'

Dreadful were these commands; but worse  
than these

The parting hint—a farmer could not please:  
'Tis true she had without abhorrence seen  
Young Harry Carr, when he was smart and  
clean;

But to be married—be a farmer's wife—  
A slave! a drudge!—she could not, for her  
life.

With swimming eyes the fretful nymph  
withdrew,

And, deeply sighing, to her chamber flew;  
There on her knees, to Heav'n she grieving  
pray'd

For change of prospect to a tortured maid.

Harry, a youth whose late-departed sire  
Had left him all industrious men require,  
Saw the pale beauty—and her shape and air  
Engaged him much, and yet he must forbear:  
'For my small farm what can the damsel  
do?'

He said—then stopp'd to take another view:  
'Pity so sweet a lass will nothing learn  
Of household cares—for what can beauty earn  
By those small arts which they at school  
attain,

That keep them useless, and yet make them  
vain?'

This luckless damsel look'd the village  
round,

To find a friend, and one was quickly found;  
A pensive widow—whose mild air and dress  
Pleased the sad nymph, who wish'd her soul's  
distress

To one so seeming kind, confiding, to con-  
fess.—

'What lady that?' the anxious lass  
inquired,

Who then beheld the one she most admired:  
'Here,' said the brother, 'are no ladies seen—  
That is a widow dwelling on the green;  
A dainty dame, who can but barely live  
On her poor pittance, yet contrives to give;  
She happier days has known, but seems at  
ease,

And you may call her lady, if you please:  
But if you wish, good sister, to improve,  
You shall see twenty better worth your love.

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These Nancy met; but, spite of all they  
taught,

This useless widow was the one she sought:  
The father growl'd; but said he knew no harm  
In such connexion that could give alarm;  
'And if we thwart the trifler in her course,  
'Tis odds against us she will take a worse.'

Then met the friends; the widow heard the  
sigh

That ask'd at once compassion and reply:—  
'Would you, my child, converse with one so  
poor,

Yours were the kindness—yonder is my door;  
And, save the time that we in public pray,  
From that poor cottage I but rarely stray.'

There went the nymph, and made her  
strong complaints,

Painting her wo as injured feeling paints.

'Oh, dearest friend! do think how one  
must feel,

Shock'd all day long, and sicken'd every meal;  
Could you behold our kitchen (and to you  
A scene so shocking must indeed be new),  
A mind like yours, with true refinement  
graced,

Would let no vulgar scenes pollute your taste;  
And yet, in truth, from such a polish'd mind  
All base ideas must resistance find,  
And sordid pictures from the fancy pass,  
As the breath startles from the polish'd glass.

'Here you enjoy a sweet romantic scene,  
Without so pleasant, and within so clean;  
These twining jess'mines, what delicious  
gloom

And soothing fragrance yield they to the  
room!

What lovely garden! there you oft retire,  
And tales of wo and tenderness admire:  
In that neat case your books, in order placed,  
Soothe the full soul, and charm the cultured  
taste;

And thus, while all about you wears a charm,  
How must you scorn the farmer and the  
farm!'

The widow smiled, and 'Know you not,'  
said she,

'How much these farmers scorn or pity me;  
Who see what you admire, and laugh at all  
they see?

True, their opinion alters not my fate,  
By falsely judging of an humble state:  
This garden, you with such delight behold,  
Tempts not a feeble dame who dreads the cold;

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These plants, which please so well your livelier sense,

To mine but little of their sweets dispense ;  
Books soon are painful to my failing sight,  
And oftener read from duty than delight ;  
(Yet let me own, that I can sometimes find  
Both joy and duty in the act combined ;)  
But view me rightly, you will see no more  
Than a poor female, willing to be poor ;  
Happy indeed, but not in books nor flowers  
Not in fair dreams, indulged in earlier hours,  
Of never-tasted joys ;—such visions shun,  
My youthful friend, nor scorn the farmers' son."

'Nay,' said the damsel, nothing pleased to see

A friend's advice could like a father's be,  
'Bless'd in your cottage, you must surely smile

At those who live in our detested style :  
To my Lucinda's sympathizing heart  
Could I my prospects and my griefs impart,  
She would console me ; but I dare not show  
Ills that would wound her tender soul to know :

And I confess, it shocks my pride to tell  
The secrets of the prison where I dwell ;  
For that dear maiden would be shock'd to feel  
The secrets I should shudder to reveal ;  
When told her friend was by a parent ask'd,  
Fed you the swine ?—Good heav'n ! how I am task'd !

What ! can you smile ? Ah ! smile not at the grief

That woos your pity and demands relief."

'Trifles, my love ; you take a false alarm ;  
Think, I beseech you, better of the farm :  
Duties in every state demand your care,  
And light are those that will require it there :  
Fix on the youth a favouring eye, and these,  
To him pertaining, or as his, will please.'

'What words,' the lass replied, 'offend my ear !

Try you my patience ? Can you be sincere ?  
And am I told a willing hand to give  
To a rude farmer, and with rustic life ?  
Far other fate was yours :—some gentle youth  
Admired your beauty, and avow'd his truth ;  
The power of love prevail'd, and freely both  
Gave the fond heart, and pledged the binding oath ;

And then the rival's plot, the parent's power,  
And jealous fears, drew on the happy hour :

Ah ! let not memory lose the blissful view,  
But fairly show what love has done for you.'

'Agreed, my daughter ; what my heart has known

Of love's strange power shall be with frankness shown :

But let me warn you, that experience finds  
Few of the scenes that lively hope designs.'—

'Mysterious all,' said Nancy ; 'you, I know,

Have suffer'd much ; now deign the grief to show ;—

I am your friend, and so prepare my heart  
In all your sorrows to receive a part."

The widow answer'd : 'I had once, like you,  
Such thoughts of love ; no dream is more untrue :

You judge it fated and decreed to dwell  
In youthful hearts, which nothing can expel,  
A passion doom'd to reign, and irresistible.  
The struggling mind, when once subdued, in vain

Rejects the fury or defies the pain ;  
The strongest reason fails the flame t' allay,  
And resolution droops and faints away :  
Hence, when the destined lovers meet, they prove

At once the force of this all-powerful love ;  
Each from that period feels the mutual smart,  
Nor seeks to cure it—heart is changed for heart ;

Nor is there peace till they delighted stand,  
And, at the altar—hand is join'd to hand.

'Alas ! my child, there are who, dreaming so,  
Waste their fresh youth, and waking feel the woe ;

There is no spirit sent the heart to move  
With such prevailing and alarming love ;  
Passion to reason will submit—or why  
Should wealthy maids the poorest swains deny ?

Or how could classes and degrees create  
The slightest bar to such resistless fate ?  
Yet high and low, you see, forbear to mix ;  
No beggars' eyes the heart of kings transfix ;  
And who but am'rous peers or nobles sigh  
When titled beauties pass triumphant by ?  
For reason wakes, proud wishes to reprove :  
You cannot hope, and therefore dare not love :

All would be safe, did we at first inquire—  
"Does reason sanction what our hearts desire ?"



But quitting precept, let example show  
What joys from love uncheck'd by prudence  
flow.

'A youth my father in his office placed,  
Of humble fortune, but with sense and taste ;  
But he was thin and pale, had downcast looks ;  
He studied much, and pored upon his books :  
Confused he was when seen, and, when he saw  
Me or my sisters, would in haste withdraw ;  
And had this youth departed with the year,  
His loss had cost us neither sigh nor tear.

'But with my father still the youth remain'd,  
And more reward and kinder notice gain'd :  
He often, reading, to the garden stray'd,  
Where I by books or musing was delay'd ;  
This to discourse in summer evenings led,  
Of these same evenings, or of what we read :  
On such occasions we were much alone ;  
But, save the look, the manner, and the tone,  
(These might have meaning,) all that we  
discuss'd

We could with pleasure to a parent trust.

'At length 'twas friendship—and my friend  
and I

Said we were happy, and began to sigh :  
My sisters first, and then my father, found  
That we were wandering o'er enchanted  
ground ;

But he had troubles in his own affairs,  
And would not bear addition to his cares :  
With pity moved, yet angry, "Child," said  
he,

"Will you embrace contempt and beggary ?  
Can you endure to see each other cursed  
By want, of every human woe the worst ?  
Warring for ever with distress, in dread  
Either of begging or of wanting bread ;  
While poverty, with unrelenting force,  
Will your own offspring from your love  
divorce ;

They, through your folly, must be doom'd to  
pine,

And you deplore your passion, or resign ;  
For, if it die, what good will then remain ?  
And if it live, it doubles every pain."

'But you were true,' exclaim'd the lass,  
'and fled

The tyrant's power who fill'd your soul with  
dread ?

'But,' said the smiling friend, 'he fill'd my  
mouth with bread :

And in what other place that bread to gain  
We long consider'd, and we sought in vain :

This was my twentieth year—at thirty-five  
Our hope was fainter, yet our love alive ;  
So many years in anxious doubt had pass'd.'  
'Then,' said the damsel, 'you were bless'd  
at last ?'

A smile again adorn'd the widow's face,  
But soon a starting tear usurp'd its place.

'Slow pass'd the heavy years, and each  
had more

Pains and vexations than the years before.  
My father fail'd ; his family was rent,  
And to new states his grieving daughters sent ;  
Each to more thriving kindred found a way,  
Guests without welcome—servants without  
pay ;

Our parting hour was grievous ; still I feel  
The sad, sweet converse at our final meal ;  
Our father then reveal'd his former fears,  
Cause of his sternness, and then join'd our  
tears ;

Kindly he strove our feelings to repress,  
But died, and left us heirs to his distress.  
The rich, as humble friends, my sisters chose,  
I with a wealthy widow sought repose ;  
Who with a chilling frown her friend received,  
Bade me rejoice, and wonder'd that I grieved :  
In vain my anxious lover tried his skill  
To rise in life, he was dependent still ;  
We met in grief, nor can I paint the fears  
Of these unhappy, troubled, trying years ;  
Our dying hopes and stronger fears between,  
We felt no season peaceful or serene ;  
Our fleeting joys, like meteors in the night,  
Shone on our gloom with inauspicious light ;  
And then domestic sorrows, till the mind,  
Worn with distresses, to despair inclined ;  
Add too the ill that from the passion flows,  
When its contemptuous frown the world  
bestows,

The peevish spirit caused by long delay,  
When, being gloomy, we contemn the gay,  
When, being wretched, we incline to hate  
And censure others in a happier state ;  
Yet loving still, and still compell'd to move  
In the sad labyrinth of ling'ring love :  
While you, exempt from want, despair, alarm,  
May wed—oh ! take the farmer and the farm.'

'Nay,' said the nymph, 'joy smiled on you  
at last ?'

'Smiled for a moment,' she replied, 'and  
pass'd :

My lover still the same dull means pursued,  
Assistant call'd, but kept in servitude ;

His spirits wearied in the prime of life,  
By fears and wishes in eternal strife;  
At length he urged impatient—"Now consent;  
With thee united, fortune may relent."  
I paused, consenting; but a friend arose,  
Pleased a fair view, though distant, to dis-  
close;

From the rough ocean we beheld a gleam  
Of joy, as transient as the joys we dream;  
By lying hopes deceived, my friend retired,  
And sail'd—was wounded—reach'd us—and  
expired!

You shall behold his grave, and when I die,  
There—but 'tis folly—I request to lie.'

'Thus,' said the lass, 'to joy you bade  
adieu!

But how a widow?—that cannot be true:  
Or was it force, in some unhappy hour,  
That placed you, grieving, in a tyrant's  
power?'

'Force, my young friend, when forty years  
are fled,

Is what a woman seldom has to dread;  
She needs no brazen locks nor guarding walls;  
And seldom comes a lover though she calls:  
Yet moved by fancy, one approved my face,  
Though time and tears had wrought it much  
disgrace.

'The man I married was sedate and meek,  
And spoke of love as men in earnest speak;  
Poor as I was, he ceaseless sought, for years,  
A heart in sorrow and a face in tears;  
That heart I gave not; and 'twas long before  
I gave attention, and then nothing more;  
But in my breast some grateful feeling rose  
For one whose love so sad a subject chose;  
Till long delaying, fearing to repent,  
But grateful still, I gave a cold assent.

'Thus we were wed; no fault had I to find,  
And he but one; my heart could not be kind:  
Alas! of every early hope bereft,  
There was no fondness in my bosom left;  
So had I told him, but had told in vain,  
He lived but to indulge me and complain:  
His was this cottage, he inclosed this ground,  
And planted all these blooming shrubs around;  
He to my room these curious trifles brought,  
And with assiduous love my pleasure sought;  
He lived to please me, and I oft times strove,  
Smiling, to thank his unrequited love:  
"Teach me," he cried, "that pensive mind  
to ease,

For all my pleasure is the hope to please."

'Serene, though heavy, were the days we  
spent,

Yet kind each word, and gen'rous each intent;  
But his dejection lessen'd every day,  
And to a placid kindness died away:  
In tranquil ease we pass'd our latter years,  
By griefs untroubled, unassail'd by fears.

'Let not romantic views your bosom sway,  
Yield to your duties, and their call obey:  
Fly not a youth, frank, honest, and sincere;  
Observe his merits, and his passion hear!

'Tis true, no hero, but a farmer sues—  
Slow in his speech, but worthy in his views;  
With him you cannot that affliction prove,  
That rends the bosom of the poor in love:  
Health, comfort, competence, and cheerful  
days,

Your friends' approval, and your father's  
praise,

Will crown the deed, and you escape *their* fate  
Who plan so wildly, and are wise too late.'

The damsel heard; at first th' advice was  
strange,

Yet wrought a happy, nay, a speedy change:  
'I haveno care,' she said, when next they met,  
'But one may wonder he is silent yet;  
He looks around him with his usual stare,  
And utters nothing—not that I shall care.'

This pettish humour pleased th' experienced  
friend—

None need despair, whose silence can offend;  
'Should I,' resumed the thoughtful lass,  
'consent

To hear the man, the man may now repent:  
Think you my sighs shall call him from the  
plough,

Or give one hint, that "You may woo me  
now?"'

'Persist, my love,' replied the friend, 'and  
gain

A parent's praise, *that* cannot be in vain.'

The father saw the change, but not the  
cause,

And gave the alter'd maid his fond applause:  
The coarser manners she in part removed,  
In part endured, improving and improved;  
She spoke of household works, she rose be-  
times,

And said neglect and indolence were crimes;  
The various duties of their life she weigh'd,  
And strict attention to her dairy paid;  
The names of servants now familiar grew,  
And fair Lucinda's from her mind withdrew:

As prudent travellers for their ease assume  
*Their* modes and language to whose lands  
 they come :

So to the farmer this fair lass inclined,  
 Gave to the business of the farm her mind ;  
 To useful arts she turn'd her hand and eye ;  
 And by her manners told him—' You may try.'

Th' observing lover more attention paid,  
 With growing pleasure, to the alter'd maid ;  
 He fear'd to lose her, and began to see  
 That a slim beauty might a helpmate be :  
 'Twixt hope and fear he now the lass address'd,  
 And in his Sunday robe his love express'd :  
 She felt no chilling dread, no thrilling joy,  
 Nor was too quickly kind, too slowly coy ;  
 But still she lent an unreluctant ear  
 To all the rural business of the year ;  
 Till love's strong hopes endured no more delay,  
 And Harry ask'd, and Nancy named the day.

' A happy change ! my boy,' the father  
 cried :  
 ' How lost your sister all her school-day  
 pride ?'

The youth replied, ' It is the widow's deed :  
 The cure is perfect, and was wrought with  
 speed.'—

' And comes there, boy, this benefit of books,  
 Of that smart dress, and of those dainty looks ?  
 We must be kind—some offerings from the  
 farm

To the white cot will speak our feelings warm ;  
 Will show that people, when they know the  
 fact,

Where they have judged severely, can retract.  
 Oft have I smiled, when I beheld her pass  
 With cautious step, as if she hurt the grass ;  
 Where if a snail's retreat she chanced to storm,  
 She look'd as begging pardon of the worm ;  
 And what, said I, still laughing at the view,  
 Have these weak creatures in the world to do ?  
 But some are made for action, some to speak ;  
 And, while she looks so pitiful and meek,  
 Her words are weighty, though her nerves  
 are weak.'

Soon told the village-bells the rite was done,  
 That join'd the school-bred miss and farmer's  
 son ;

Her former habits some slight scandal raised,  
 But real worth was soon perceived and  
 praised ;

She, her neat taste imparted to the farm,  
 And he, th' improving skill and vigorous arm.

## TALE VIII. THE MOTHER

What though you have no beauty, . . .  
 Must you be therefore proud and pitiless ?

*As You Like It*, Act iii, Scene 5.

I would not marry her, though she were  
 endowed with all that Adam had left him  
 before he transgressed.

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act ii, Scene 1.

Wilt thou love such a woman ? What ! to  
 make thee an instrument, and play false  
 strains upon thee !—Not to be endured.

*As You Like It*, Act iv, Scene 3.

Your son,  
 As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know  
 Her estimation home.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, Act v, Scene 3.

Be this sweet Helen's knell ; . . .  
 He a wife lost whose words all ears took  
 captive, . . .

Whose dear perfection, hearts that scorn'd to  
 serve

Humbly call'd mistress.

*All's Well that Ends Well*, Act v, Scene 3.

THERE was a worthy, but a simple pair,  
 Who nursed a daughter, fairest of the fair :  
 Sons they had lost, and she alone remain'd ;  
 Heir to the kindness they had all obtain'd ;  
 Heir to the fortune they design'd for all,  
 Nor had th' allotted portion then been small ;  
 But now, by fate enrich'd with beauty rare,  
 They watch'd their treasure with peculiar  
 care :

The fairest features they could early trace,  
 And, blind with love, saw merit in her face—  
 Saw virtue, wisdom, dignity, and grace ;  
 And Dorothea, from her infant years,  
 Gain'd all her wishes from their pride or fears  
 She wrote a billet, and a novel read,  
 And with her fame her vanity was fed ;  
 Each word, each look, each action was a cause  
 For flattering wonder, and for fond applause ;  
 She rode or danced, and ever glanced around,  
 Seeking for praise, and smiling when she found.  
 The yielding pair to her petitions gave  
 An humble friend to be a civil slave ;

Who for a poor support herself resign'd  
To the base toil of a dependent mind :  
By nature cold, our heiress stoop'd to art,  
To gain the credit of a tender heart.  
Hence at her door must suppliant paupers  
stand,

To bless the bounty of her beauteous hand :  
And now, her education all complete,  
She talk'd of virtuous love and union sweet ;  
She was indeed by no soft passion moved,  
But wish'd, with all her soul, to be be-  
loved.

Here on the favour'd beauty fortune smiled ;  
Her chosen husband was a man so mild,  
So humbly temper'd, so intent to please,  
It quite distress'd her to remain at ease,  
Without a cause to sigh, without pretence to  
tease :

She tried his patience in a thousand modes,  
And tired it not upon the roughest roads.  
Pleasure she sought, and, disappointed, sigh'd  
For joys, she said, ' to her alone denied ; '  
And she was ' sure her parents, if alive,  
Would many comforts for their child con-  
trive : '

The gentle husband bade her name him one ;  
' No—that,' she answer'd, ' should for her be  
done ;

How could she say what pleasures were  
around ?

But she was certain many might be found.'—  
' Would she some sea-port, Weymouth,  
Scarborough, grace ? '

' He knew she hated every watering-place : '  
' The town ? '—' What ! now 'twas empty,  
joyless, dull ? '

—' In winter ? '—' No ; she liked it worse  
when full.'

She talk'd of building—' Would she plan  
a room ? '

' No ! she could live, as he desired, in gloom : '  
' Call then our friends and neighbours : '—  
' He might call,

And they might come and fill his ugly hall ;  
A noisy vulgar set, he knew she scorn'd them  
all : '

' Then might their two dear girls the time  
employ,

And their improvement yield a solid joy.'—  
' Solid indeed ! and heavy—oh ! the bliss  
Of teaching letters to a lisping Miss ! '

' My dear, my gentle Dorothea, say,  
Can I oblige you ? '—' You may go away.'

Twelve heavy years this patient soul  
sustain'd

This wasp's attacks, and then her praise  
obtain'd,

Graved on a marble tomb, where he at peace  
remain'd.

Two daughters wept their loss ; the one  
a child

With a plain face, strong sense, and temper  
mild,

Who keenly felt the mother's angry taunt,  
' Thou art the image of thy pious aunt : '

Long time had Lucy wept her slighted face,  
And then began to smile at her disgrace.

Her father's sister, who the world had seen  
Near sixty years when Lucy saw sixteen,

Begg'd the plain girl : the gracious mother  
smiled,

And freely gave her grieved but passive child ;  
And with her elder-born, the beauty bless'd,

This parent rested, if such minds can rest :  
No miss her waxen babe could so admire,

Nurse with such care, or with such pride  
attire ;

They were companions meet, with equal mind,  
Bless'd with one love, and to one point in-  
clined ;

Beauty to keep, adorn, increase, and guard,  
Was their sole care, and had its full reward :

In rising splendor with the one it reign'd,  
And in the other was by care sustain'd,

The daughter's charms increased, the parent's  
yet remain'd.

Leave we these ladies to their daily care,  
To see how meekness and discretion fare :—

A village maid, unvex'd by want or love,  
Could not with more delight than Lucy

move ;

The village-lark, high mounted in the spring,  
Could not with purer joy than Lucy sing ;

Her cares all light, her pleasures all sincere,  
Her duty joy, and her companion dear ;

In tender friendship and in true respect  
Lived aunt and niece, no flattery, no neglect—

They read, walk'd, visited—together pray'd,  
Together slept the matron and the maid :

There was such goodness, such pure nature  
seen

In Lucy's looks, a manner so serene ;  
Such harmony in motion, speech, and air,

That without fairness she was more than fair :  
Had more than beauty in each speaking grace,

That lent their cloudless glory to the face ;

Where mild good sense in placid looks were shown,

And felt in every bosom but her own.  
The one presiding feature in her mind,  
Was the pure meekness of a will resign'd ;  
A tender spirit, freed from all pretence  
Of wit, and pleased in mild benevolence ;  
Bless'd in protecting fondness she reposed,  
With every wish indulged though undisclosed ;  
But love, like zephyr on the limpid lake,  
Was now the bosom of the maid to shake,  
And in that gentle mind a gentle strife to make.

Among their chosen friends a favour'd few,  
The aunt and niece a youthful rector knew ;  
Who, though a younger brother, might address  
A younger sister, fearless of success :  
His friends, a lofty race, their native pride  
At first display'd, and their assent denied ;  
But, pleased such virtues and such love to trace,

They own'd she would adorn the loftiest race.  
The aunt, a mother's caution to supply,  
Had watch'd the youthful priest with jealous eye ;

And, anxious for her charge, had view'd unseen

The cautious life that keeps the conscience clean :

In all she found him all she wish'd to find,  
With slight exception of a lofty mind :  
A certain manner that express'd desire,  
To be received as brother to the 'squire.

Lucy's meek eye had beam'd with many a tear,  
Lucy's soft heart had beat with many a fear,  
Before he told (although his looks, she thought,  
Had oft confess'd) that he her favour sought :  
But when he kneel'd, (she wish'd him not to kneel.)

And spoke the fears and hopes that lovers feel ;

When too the prudent aunt herself confess'd,  
Her wishes on the gentle youth would rest ;  
The maiden's eye with tender passion beam'd,  
She dwelt with fondness on the life she schemed ;

The household cares, the soft and lasting ties  
Of love, with all his binding charities ;  
Their village taught, consoled, assisted, fed,  
Till the young zealot tears of pleasure shed.

But would her mother ? Ah ! she fear'd it wrong

To have indulged these forward hopes so long ;

Her mother loved, but was not used to grant  
Favours so freely as her gentle aunt.—

Her gentle aunt, with smiles that angels wear,  
Dispell'd her Lucy's apprehensive tear :  
Her prudent foresight the request had made  
To one whom none could govern, few persuade ;

She doubted much if one in earnest woo'd  
A girl with not a single charm endued ;  
The sister's nobler views she then declared,  
And what small sum for Lucy could be spared ;  
' If more than thus the foolish priest requires,  
Tell him,' she wrote, ' to check his vain desires.'

At length, with many a cold expression mix'd,  
With many a sneer on girls so fondly fix'd,  
There came a promise—should they not repent,

But take with grateful minds the portion meant,

And wait the sister's day—the mother might consent.

And here, might pitying hope o'er truth prevail,

Or love o'er fortune, we would end our tale :  
For who more bless'd than youthful pair removed

From fear of want—by mutual friends approved—

Short time to wait, and in that time to live  
With all the pleasures hope and fancy give ;  
Their equal passion raised on just esteem,  
When reason sanctions all that love can dream ?

Yes ! reason sanctions what stern fate denies :

The early prospect in the glory dies,  
As the soft smiles on dying infants play  
In their mild features, and then pass away.

The beauty died, ere she could yield her hand

In the high marriage by the mother plann'd :  
Who grieved indeed, but found a vast relief  
In a cold heart, that ever warr'd with grief.

Lucy was present when her sister died,  
Heiress to duties that she ill supplied :

There were no mutual feelings, sister arts,  
No kindred taste, nor intercourse of hearts  
When in the mirror play'd the matron's smile,  
The maiden's thoughts were trav'ling all the while ;

And when desired to speak, she sigh'd to find  
Her pause offended ; ' Envy made her blind :

Tasteless she was, nor had a claim in life  
Above the station of a rector's wife ;  
Yet as an heiress, she must shun disgrace,  
Although no heiress to her mother's face :  
It is your duty,' said th' imperious dame,  
' (Advanced your fortune) to advance your  
name,

And with superior rank, superior offers claim:  
Your sister's lover, when his sorrows die,  
May look upon you, and for favour sigh ;  
Nor can you offer a reluctant hand ;  
His birth is noble, and his seat is grand.'

Alarm'd was Lucy, was in tears—' A fool !  
Was she a child in love ?—a miss at school ?  
Doubts any mortal, if a change of state  
Dissolves all claims and ties of earlier date ? '

The rector doubted, for he came to mourn  
A sister dead, and with a wife return :  
Lucy with heart unchanged received the  
youth,

True in herself, confiding in his truth ;  
But own'd her mother's change : the haughty  
dame

Pour'd strong contempt upon the youthful  
flame ;

She firmly vow'd her purpose to pursue,  
Judged her own cause, and bade the youth  
adieu !

The lover begg'd, insisted, urged his pain  
His brother wrote to threaten and complain,  
Her sister reasoning proved the promise made,  
Lucy appealing to a parent pray'd ;  
But all opposed th' event that she design'd,  
And all in vain—she never changed her mind ;  
But coldly answer'd in her wonted way,  
That she ' would rule, and Lucy must obey.'

With peevish fear, she saw her health  
decline,

And cried, ' Oh ! monstrous, for a man to  
pine ;

But if your foolish heart must yield to love,  
Let him possess it whom I now approve ;  
This is my pleasure : '—Still the rector came  
With larger offers and with bolder claim ;  
But the stern lady would attend no more—  
She frown'd, and rudely pointed to the door ;  
Whate'er he wrote, he saw unread return'd,  
And he, indignant, the dishonour spurn'd ;  
Nay, fix'd suspicion where he might confide,  
And sacrificed his passion to his pride.

Lucy, meantime, though threaten'd and  
distress'd,

Against her marriage made a strong protest :

All was domestic war : the aunt rebell'd  
Against the sovereign will, and was expell'd ;  
And every power was tried and every art,  
To bend to falsehood one determined heart ;  
Assail'd, in patience it received the shock,  
Soft as the wave, unshaken as the rock :  
But while th' unconquer'd soul endures the  
storm

Of angry fate, it preys upon the form ;  
With conscious virtue she resisted still,  
And conscious love gave vigour to her will :  
But Lucy's trial was at hand ; with joy  
The mother cried—' Behold your constant  
boy—

Thursday—was married :—take the paper,  
sweet,

And read the conduct of your reverend cheat ;  
See with what pomp of coaches, in what crowd  
The creature married—of his falsehood proud !  
False, did I say ?—at least no whining fool ;  
And thus will hopeless passions ever cool :  
But shall his bride your single state reproach ?  
No ! give him crowd for crowd, and coach  
for coach.

Oh ! you retire ; reflect then, gentle miss,  
And gain some spirit in a cause like this.'

Some spirit Lucy gain'd ; a steady soul,  
Defying all persuasion, all control :  
In vain reproach, derision, threats were tried ;  
The constant mind all outward force defied,  
By vengeance vainly urged, in vain assail'd  
by pride :

Fix'd in her purpose, perfect in her part,  
She felt the courage of a wounded heart ;  
The world receded from her rising view,  
When Heaven approach'd as earthly things  
withdrew ;

Not strange before, for in the days of love,  
Joy, hope, and pleasure, she had thoughts  
above ;

Pious when most of worldly prospects fond,  
When they best pleased her she could look  
beyond :

Had the young priest a faithful lover died,  
Something had been her bosom to divide ;  
Now Heaven had all, for in her holiest views  
She saw the matron whom she fear'd to lose ;  
While from her parent, the dejected maid  
Forced the unpleasant thought, or thinking  
pray'd.

Surprised, the mother saw the languid  
frame,

And felt indignant, yet forbore to blame :

Once with a frown she cried, 'And do you mean

To die of love—the folly of fifteen ?'

But as her anger met with no reply,  
She let the gentle girl in quiet die ;  
And to her sister wrote, impell'd by pain,  
'Come quickly, Martha, or you come in vain.'  
Lucy meantime profess'd with joy sincere,  
That nothing held, employ'd, engaged her here.

'I am an humble actor, doom'd to play  
A part obscure, and then to glide away ;  
Incurious how the great or happy shine,  
Or who have parts obscure and sad as mine ;  
In its best prospect I but wish'd, for life,  
To be th' assiduous, gentle, useful wife ;  
That lost, with wearied mind, and spirit poor,  
I drop my efforts, and can act no more ;  
With growing joy I feel my spirits tend  
To that last scene where all my duties end.'

Hope, ease, delight, the thoughts of dying gave,

Till Lucy spoke with fondness of the grave ;  
She smiled with wasted form, but spirit firm,  
And said, 'She left but little for the worm :'  
As toll'd the bell, 'There's one,' she said,  
'hath press'd'

Awhile before me to the bed of rest ;'  
And she beside her with attention spread  
The decorations of the maiden dead.

While quickly thus the mortal part declined,

The happiest visions fill'd the active mind ;  
A soft, religious melancholy gain'd  
Entire possession, and for ever reign'd :  
On holy writ her mind reposing dwelt,  
She saw the wonders, she the mercies felt ;  
Till in a bless'd and glorious reverie,  
She seem'd the Saviour as on earth to see,  
And, fill'd with love divine, th' attending  
friend to be ;

Or she who trembling, yet confiding, stole  
Near to the garment, touch'd it, and was whole ;

When, such th' intensesness of the working thought,

On her it seem'd the very deed was wrought ;  
She the glad patient's fear and rapture found,  
The holy transport, and the healing wound ;  
This was so fix'd, so grafted in the heart,  
That she adopted, nay became the part :

But one chief scene was present to her sight,  
Her Saviour resting in the tomb by night ;  
Her fever rose, and still her wedded mind  
Was to that scene, that hallow'd cave, confin'd—

Where in the shade of death the body laid,  
There watch'd the spirit of the wandering maid ;

Her looks were fix'd, entranced, illumed, serene,

In the still glory of the midnight scene :  
There at her Saviour's feet, in visions bless'd,  
Th' enraptured maid a sacred joy possess'd ;  
In patience waiting for the first-born ray  
Of that all-glorious and triumphant day :  
To this idea all her soul she gave,  
Her mind reposing by the sacred grave ;  
Then sleep would seal the eye, the vision close,  
And steep the solemn thoughts in brief repose.

Then grew the soul serene, and all its powers  
Again restored illumed the dying hours ;  
But reason dwelt where fancy stray'd before,  
And the mind wander'd from its views no more ;

Till death approach'd, when every look express'd

A sense of bliss, till every sense had rest.

The mother lives, and has enough to buy  
Th' attentive ear and the submissive eye  
Of abject natures—these are daily told,  
How triumph'd beauty in the days of old ;  
How, by her window seated, crowds have cast

Admiring glances, wondering as they pass'd ;  
How from her carriage as she stepp'd to pray,  
Divided ranks would humbly make her way ;  
And how each voice in the astonish'd throng  
Pronounced her peerless as she moved along.

Her picture then the greedy dame displays ;  
Touch'd by no shame, she now demands its praise ;

In her tall mirror then she shows a face,  
Still coldly fair with unaffected grace ;  
These she compares, 'It has the form,' she cries,

'But wants the air, the spirit, and the eyes ;  
This, as a likeness, is correct and true,  
But there alone the living grace we view.'

This said, th' applauding voice the dame required,

And, gazing, slowly from the glass retired.

## TALE IX. ARABELLA

Thrice blessed they that master so their  
blood—

But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,  
Than that which, withering on the virgin  
thorn,  
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.  
*Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act i, Scene 1.

I something do excuse the thing I hate,  
For his advantage whom I dearly love.  
*Measure for Measure*, Act ii, Scene 4.

Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!  
*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act iii, Scene 1.

Of a fair town where Doctor Rack was guide,  
His only daughter was the boast and pride;  
Wise Arabella, yet not wise alone,  
She like a bright and polish'd brilliant shone;  
Her father own'd her for his prop and stay,  
Able to guide, yet willing to obey;  
Pleased with her learning while discourse  
could please,

And with her love in languor and disease:  
To every mother were her virtues known,  
And to their daughters as a pattern shown;  
Who in her youth had all that age requires,  
And with her prudence, all that youth admires:  
These odious praises made the damsels try  
Not to obtain such merits, but deny;  
For, whatsoever wise mammas might say,  
To guide a daughter, this was not the way;  
From such applause disdain and anger rise,  
And envy lives where emulation dies.  
In all his strength, contends the noble horse,  
With one who just precedes him on the course;  
But when the rival flies too far before,  
His spirit fails, and he attempts no more.

This reasoning maid, above her sex's dread,  
Had dared to read, and dared to say she read;  
Not the last novel, not the new-born play;  
Not the mere trash and scandal of the day;  
But (though her young companions felt the  
shock)

She studied Berkeley, Bacon, Hobbes, and  
Locke:

Her mind within the maze of history dwelt,  
And of the moral muse the beauty felt;  
The merits of the Roman page she knew,  
And could converse with Moore and Montagu:

Thus she became the wonder of the town,  
From that she reap'd, to that she gave renown,  
And strangers coming, all were taught  
t' admire

The learned lady, and the lofty spire.

Thus fame in public fix'd the maid, where all  
Might throw their darts, and see the idol fall;  
A hundred arrows came with vengeance keen,  
From tongues envenom'd, and from arms  
unseen;

A thousand eyes were fix'd upon the place,  
That, if she fell, she might not fly disgrace:  
But malice vainly throws the poison'd dart,  
Unless our frailty shows the peccant part;  
And Arabella still preserved her name  
Untouch'd, and shone with undisputed fame;  
Her very notice some respect would cause,  
And her esteem was honour and applause.

Men she avoided; not in childish fear,  
As if she thought some savage foe was near;  
Not as a prude, who hides that man should  
seek,

Or who by silence hints that they should  
speak;

But with discretion all the sex she view'd,  
Ere yet engaged, pursuing, or pursued;  
Ere love had made her to his vices blind,  
Or hid the favourite's failings from her mind,

Thus was the picture of the man portray'd,  
By merit destined for so rare a maid;  
At whose request she might exchange her  
state,

Or still be happy in a virgin's fate.

He must be one with manners like her  
own,

His life unquestion'd, his opinions known;  
His stainless virtue must all tests endure,  
His honour spotless, and his bosom pure;  
She no allowance made for sex or times,  
Of lax opinion—crimes were ever crimes;  
No wretch forsaken must his frailty curse,  
No spurious offspring drain his private purse:  
He at all times his passions must command,  
And yet possess—or be refused her hand.

All this without reserve the maiden told,  
And some began to weigh the rector's gold;  
To ask what sum a prudent man might  
gain,

Who had such store of virtues to maintain?



A Doctor Campbell, north of Tweed, came forth,  
Declared his passion, and proclaim'd his worth :

Not unapproved, for he had much to say  
On every cause, and in a pleasant way ;  
Not all his trust was in a pliant tongue,  
His form was good, and ruddy he, and young :  
But though the Doctor was a man of parts,  
He read not deeply male or female hearts ;  
But judged that all whom he esteem'd as wise  
Must think alike, though some assumed disguise ;

That every reasoning Bramin, Christian, Jew,  
Of all religions took their liberal view ;  
And of her own, no doubt, this learned maid  
Denied the substance, and the forms obey'd ;  
And thus persuaded, he his thought express'd  
Of her opinions, and his own profess'd :  
' All states demand this aid, the vulgar need  
Their priests and pray'rs, their sermons and their creed ;

And those of stronger minds should never speak

(In his opinion) what might hurt the weak :  
A man may smile, but still he should attend  
His hour at church, and be the church's friend,  
What there he thinks conceal, and what he hears commend.'

Frank was the speech, but heard with high disdain,

Nor had the Doctor leave to speak again ;  
A man who own'd, nay gloried in deceit,  
' He might despise her, but he should not cheat.'

Then Vicar Holmes appear'd ; he heard it said

That ancient men best pleased the prudent maid ;

And true it was her ancient friends she loved,  
Servants when old she favour'd and approved ;  
Age in her pious parents she revered,  
And neighbours were by length of days endear'd ;

But, if her husband too must ancient be,  
The good old Vicar found it was not he.

On Captain Bligh her mind in balance hung—

Though valiant, modest ; and reserved,  
though young :

Against these merits must defects be set—

Though poor, imprudent ; and though proud,  
in debt

In vain the Captain close attention paid ;  
She found him wanting, whom she fairly weigh'd.

Then came a youth, and all their friends agreed,

That Edward Huntly was the man indeed ;  
Respectful duty he had paid awhile,  
Then ask'd her hand, and had a gracious smile :

A lover now declared, he led the fair  
To woods and fields, to visits and to pray'r ;  
Then whisper'd softly—' Will you name the day ?'

She softly whisper'd—' If you love me, stay :'  
' Oh ! try me not beyond my strength,' he cried :

' Oh ! be not weak,' the prudent maid replied ;  
' But by some trial your affection prove—  
Respect and not impatience argues love :  
And love no more is by impatience known,  
Than Ocean's depth is by its tempests shown :  
He whom a weak and fond impatience sways,  
But for himself with all his fervour prays,  
And not the maid he woos, but his own will obeys ;

And will she love the being who prefers,  
With so much ardour, his desire to hers ?'

Young Edward grieved, but let not grief be seen ;

He knew obedience pleased his fancy's queen :  
Awhile he waited, and then cried—' Behold !  
The year advancing, be no longer cold !'

For she had promised—' Let the flowers appear,

And I will pass with thee the smiling year :  
Then pressing grew the youth ; the more he press'd,

The less inclined the maid to his request :  
' Let June arrive.'—Alas ! when April came,  
It brought a stranger, and the stranger, shame ;

Nor could the lover from his house persuade  
A stubborn lass whom he had mournful made ;  
Angry and weak, by thoughtless vengeance moved,

She told her story to the fair beloved ;  
In strongest words th' unwelcome truth was shown,

To blight his prospects, careless of her own.  
Our heroine grieved, but had too firm a heart  
For him to soften, when she swore to part ;  
In vain his seeming penitence and pray'r,  
His vows, his tears ; she left him in despair :

His mother fondly laid her grief aside,  
And to the reason of the nymph applied—  
'It well becomes thee, lady, to appear,  
But not to be, in very truth, severe;  
Although the crime be odious in thy sight,  
That daring sex is taught such things to slight:  
His heart is thine, although it once was frail;  
Think of his grief, and let his love prevail!—'  
'Plead thou no more,' the lofty lass  
return'd;

'Forgiving woman is deceived and spurn'd:  
Say that the crime is common—shall I take  
A common man my wedded lord to make?  
See! a weak woman by his arts betray'd,  
An infant born his father to upbraid;  
Shall I forgive his vileness, take his name,  
Sanction his error, and partake his shame?  
No! this assent would kindred frailty prove,  
A love for him would be a vicious love:  
Can a chaste maiden secret counsel hold  
With one whose crime by every mouth is told?  
Forbid it spirit, prudence, virtuous pride;  
He must despise me, were he not denied:  
The way from vice the erring mind to win  
Is with presuming sinners to begin,  
And show, by scorning them, a just contempt  
for sin.'

The youth repulsed, to one more mild  
convey'd

His heart, and smiled on the remorseless maid;  
The maid, remorseless in her pride, the while  
Despised the insult, and return'd the smile.

First to admire, to praise her, and defend,  
Was (now in years advanced) a virgin friend:  
Much she preferr'd, she cried, a single state,  
'It was her choice'—it surely was her fate;  
And much it pleased her in the train to view  
A maiden votress, wise and lovely too.

Time to the yielding mind his change im-  
parts,

He varies notions, and he alters hearts;  
'Tis right, 'tis just to feel contempt for vice,  
But he that shows it may be over-nice:  
There are who feel, when young, the false  
sublime.

And proudly love to show disdain for crime;  
To whom the future will new thoughts supply,  
The pride will soften, and the scorn will die;  
Nay, where they still the vice itself condemn,  
They bear the vicious, and consort with them:  
Young Captain Grove, when one had changed  
his side,

Despised the venal turn-coat, and defied;

Old Colonel Grove now shakes him by the  
hand,

Though he who bribes may still his vote  
command:

Why would not Ellen to Belinda speak,  
When she had flown to London for a week;  
And then return'd, to every friend's surprise,  
With twice the spirit, and with half the size?  
She spoke not then—but after years had  
flown,

A better friend had Ellen never known:  
Was it the lady her mistake had seen?  
Or had she also such a journey been?  
No: 'twas the gradual change in human  
hearts,  
That time, in commerce with the world,  
imparts;

That on the roughest temper throws disguise,  
And steals from virtue her asperities.  
The young and ardent, who with glowing zeal  
Felt wrath for trifles, and were proud to feel,  
Now find those trifles all the mind engage,  
To soothe the dull hours, and cheat the cares of  
age;

As young Zelinda, in her quaker-dress,  
Disdain'd each varying fashion's vile excess,  
And now her friends on old Zelinda gaze,  
Pleased in rich silks and orient gems to blaze:  
Changes like these tis' folly to condemn,  
So virtue yields not, nor is changed with them.

Let us proceed:—Twelve brilliant years  
were past,

Yet each with less of glory than the last;  
Whether these years to this fair virgin gave  
A softer mind—effect they often have;  
Whether the virgin-state was not so bless'd  
As that good maiden in her zeal profess'd;  
Or whether lovers falling from her train,  
Gave greater price to those she could retain,  
Is all unknown;—but Arabella now  
Was kindly listening to a merchant's vow;  
Who offer'd terms so fair, against his love  
To strive was folly, so she never strove.—  
Man in his earlier days we often find  
With a too easy and unguarded mind;  
But by increasing years and prudence taught,  
He grows reserved, and locks up every  
thought:

Not thus the maiden, for in blooming youth  
She hides her thought, and guards the tender  
truth:

This, when no longer young, no more she hides,  
But frankly in the favour'd swain confides:

Man, stubborn man, is like the growing tree,  
That longer standing, still will harder be ;  
And like its fruit, the virgin, first austere,  
Then kindly softening with the ripening year.

Now was the lover urgent, and the kind  
And yielding lady to his suit inclined :  
' A little time, my friend, is just, is right ;  
We must be decent in our neighbours' sight :'  
Still she allow'd him of his hopes to speak,  
And in compassion took off week by week ;  
Till few remain'd, when, wearied with delay,  
She kindly meant to take off day by day.

That female friend who gave our virgin  
praise

For flying man and all his treacherous ways,  
Now heard with mingled anger, shame and  
fear,

Of one accepted, and a wedding near ;  
But she resolved again with friendly zeal  
To make the maid her scorn of wedlock feel ;  
For she was grieved to find her work undone,  
And like a sister mourn'd the failing nun.

Why are these gentle maidens prone to make  
Theirsister-doves the tempting world forsake ?  
Why all their triumph when a maid disdains  
The tyrant-sex, and scorns to wear its chains ?  
Is it pure joy to see a sister flown  
From the false pleasures they themselves have  
known ?

Or do they, as the call-birds in the cage,  
Try, in pure envy, others to engage ;  
And therefore paint their native woods and  
groves,  
As scenes of dangerous joys and naughty  
loves ?

Strong was the maiden's hope ; her friend  
was proud,

And had her notions to the world avow'd ;  
And, could she find the Merchant weak and  
frail,

With power to prove it, then she must prevail ;  
For she aloud would publish his disgrace,  
And save his victim from a man so base.

When all inquiries had been duly made,  
Came the kind friend her burthen to unlade—  
' Alas ! my dear ! not all our care and art  
Can tread the maze of man's deceitful heart :  
Look not surprise—nor let resentment swell  
Those lovely features, all will yet be well ;  
And thou, from love's and man's deceptions  
free,

Wilt dwell in virgin-state, and walk to heav'n  
with me.'

The maiden frown'd, and then conceived  
' that wives

Could walk as well, and lead as holy lives  
As angry prudes who scorn'd the marriage-  
chain,

Or luckless maids who sought it still in vain.'

The friend was vex'd—she paused, at length  
she cried :

' Know your own danger, then your lot decide :  
That traitor Beswell, while he seeks your hand,  
Has, I affirm, a wanton at command ;  
A slave, a creature from a foreign place,  
The nurse and mother of a spurious race ;  
Brown, ugly bastards—(Heaven the word  
forgive,

And the deed punish !)—in his cottage live ;  
To town if business calls him, there he stays  
In sinful pleasures wasting countless days ;  
Nor doubt the facts, for I can witness call  
For every crime, and prove them one and  
all.'

Here ceased th' informer ; Arabella's look  
Was like a school-boy's puzzled by his book ;  
Intent she cast her eyes upon the floor,  
Paused—then replied—

' I wish to know no more :  
I question not your motive, zeal, or love,  
But must decline such dubious points to  
prove—

All is not true, I judge, for who can guess  
Those deeds of darkness men with care  
suppress ?

He brought a slave perhaps to England's  
coast,

And made her free ; it is our country's boast !  
And she perchance too grateful—good and ill  
Were sown at first, and grow together still ;  
The colour'd infants on the village-green,  
What are they more than we have often seen ?  
Children half-clothed who round their village  
stray,

In sun or rain, now starved, now beaten, they  
Will the dark colour of their fate betray :  
Let us in Christian love for all account,  
And then behold to what such tales amount.'

' His heart is evil,' said th' impatient friend :  
' My duty bids me try that heart to mend,'  
Replied the virgin—' We may be too nice,  
And lose a soul in our contempt of vice ;  
If false the charge, I then shall show regard  
For a good man, and be his just reward :  
And what for virtue can I better do  
Than to reclaim him, if the charge be true ?'

She spoke, nor more her holy work delay'd ;  
 'Twas time to lend an erring mortal aid :  
 'The noblest way,' she judged, 'a soul to win,  
 Was with an act of kindness to begin,  
 To make the sinner sure, and then t' attack  
 the sin.' \*

\* As the author's purpose in this Tale may be mistaken, he wishes to observe, that conduct

like that of the lady's here described must be meritorious or censurable just as the motives to it are pure or selfish; that these motives may in a great measure be concealed from the mind of the agent; and that we often take credit to our virtue for actions which spring originally from our tempers, inclinations, or our indifference. It cannot therefore be improper, much less immoral, to give an instance of such self-deception.

## TALE X. THE LOVER'S JOURNEY

The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day,  
 Attended with the pleasures of the world,  
 Is all too wanton.

*King John, Act iii, Scene 3.*

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
 Are of imagination all compact.

*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act v, Scene 1.*

Oh! how the spring of love resembleth  
 Th' uncertain glory of an April day,  
 Which now shows all her beauty to the sun,  
 And by and by a cloud bears all away.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act i, Scene 3.*

And happily I have arrived at last  
 Unto the wished haven of my bliss.

*Taming of the Shrew, Act v, Scene 1.*

It is the soul that sees; the outward eyes  
 Present the object, but the mind describes;  
 And thence delight, disgust, or cool indifference  
 rise:

When minds are joyful, then we look around,  
 And what is seen is all on fairy ground;  
 Again they sicken, and on every view  
 Cast their own dull and melancholy hue;  
 Or, if absorb'd by their peculiar cares,  
 The vacant eye on viewless matter glares,  
 Our feelings still upon our views attend,  
 And their own natures to the objects lend;  
 Sorrow and joy are in their influence sure,  
 Long as the passion reigns th' effects endure;  
 But love in minds his various changes makes,  
 And clothes each object with the change he  
 takes;

His light and shade on every view he throws,  
 And on each object, what he feels, bestows.

Fair was the morning, and the month was  
 June,

When rose a lover; love awakens soon;  
 Brief his repose, yet much he dreamt the while  
 Of that day's meeting, and his Laura's smile;

Fancy and love that name assign'd to her,  
 Call'd Susan in the parish-register;  
 And he no more was John—his Laura gave  
 The name Orlando to her faithful slave.

Bright shone the glory of the rising day,  
 When the fond traveller took his favourite  
 way;

He mounted gaily, felt his bosom light,  
 And all he saw was pleasing in his sight.

'Ye hours of expectation, quickly fly,  
 And bring on hours of blest reality;  
 When I shall Laura see, beside her stand,  
 Hear her sweet voice, and press her yielded  
 hand.'

First o'er a barren heath beside the coast  
 Orlando rode, and joy began to boast.

'This neat low gorse,' said he, 'with golden  
 bloom,

Delights each sense, is beauty, is perfume;  
 And this gay ling, with all its purple flowers,  
 A man at leisure might admire for hours;  
 This green-fringed cup-moss has a scarlet tip,  
 That yields to nothing but my Laura's lip;  
 And then how fine this herbage! men may  
 say

A heath is barren; nothing is so gay:  
 Barren or bare to call such charming scene,  
 Argues a mind possess'd by care and spleen.'

Onward he went, and fiercer grew the  
 heat,

Dust rose in clouds before the horse's feet;  
 For now he pass'd through lanes of burning  
 sand,

Bound to thin crops or yet uncultured land;  
 Where the dark poppy flourish'd on the dry  
 And sterile soil, and mock'd the thin-set rye.

'How lovely this!' the rapt Orlando said;  
 'With what delight is labouring man repaid!  
 The very lane has sweets that all admire,  
 The rambling suckling and the vigorous brier;

See ! wholesome wormwood grows beside the way,  
Where dew-press'd yet the dog-rose bends the spray ;  
Fresh herbs the fields, fair shrubs the banks adorn,  
And snow-white bloom falls flaky from the thorn ;  
No fostering hand they need, no sheltering wall,  
They spring uncultured and they bloom for all.\*

The lover rode as hasty lovers ride,  
And reach'd a common pasture wild and wide ;  
Small black-legg'd sheep devour with hunger keen

The meagre herbage, fleshless, lank, and lean ;  
Such o'er thy level turf, Newmarket ! stray,  
And there, with other *black-legs* find their prey :  
He saw some scatter'd hovels ; turf was piled  
In square brown stacks ; a prospect bleak and wild !

A mill, indeed, was in the centre found,  
With short sear herbage withering all around ;  
A smith's black shed opposed a wright's long shop,  
And join'd an inn where humble travellers stop.

'Ay, this is Nature,' said the gentle 'squire ;  
'This ease, peace, pleasure—who would not admire ?

With what delight these sturdy children play,  
And joyful rustics at the close of day ;  
Sport follows labour, on this even space  
Will soon commence the wrestling and the race ;

Then will the village maidens leave their home,

And to the dance with buoyant spirits come ;  
No affectation in their looks is seen,  
Nor know they what disguise or flattery mean ;  
Nor ought to move an envious pang they see,  
Easy their service, and their love is free ;  
Hence early springs that love, it long endures,  
And life's first comfort, while they live, ensures :

They the low roof and rustic comforts prize,  
Nor cast on prouder mansions envying eyes ;  
Sometimes the news at yonder town they hear,

And learn what busier mortals feel and fear ;  
Secure themselves, although by tales amazed,  
Of towns bombarded and of cities razed ;

As if they doubted, in their still retreat,  
The very news that makes their quiet sweet,  
And their days happy—happier only knows  
He on whom Laura her regard bestows.\*

On rode Orlando, counting all the while  
The miles he pass'd and every coming mile ;  
Like all attracted things, he quicker flies,  
The place approaching where th' attraction lies ;

When next appear'd a *dam*—so call the place—

Where lies a road confined in narrow space ;  
A work of labour, for on either side  
Is level fen, a prospect wild and wide,  
With dikes on either hand by ocean's self supplied :

Far on the right the distant sea is seen,  
And salt the springs that feed the marsh between ;

Beneath an ancient bridge, the straiten'd flood

Rolls through its sloping banks of slimy mud ;  
Near it a sunken boat resists the tide,  
That frets and hurries to th' opposing side ;  
The rushes sharp, that on the borders grow,

Bend their brown flow'rets to the stream below,

Impure in all its course, in all its progress slow :

Here a grave \* *Flora* scarcely deigns to bloom ;  
Nor wears a rosy blush, nor sheds perfume ;

\* The ditches of a fen so near the ocean are lined with irregular patches of a coarse and stained lava ; a muddy sediment rests on the horse-tail and other perennial herbs, which in part conceal the shallowness of the stream ; a fat-leaved pale-flowering scurvy-grass appears early in the year, and the razor-edged bull-rush in the summer and autumn. The fen itself has a dark and saline herbage ; there are rushes and *arrow-head*, and in a few patches the flakes of the cotton-grass are seen, but more commonly the *sea-aster*, the duller of that numerous and hardy genus ; a *thrift*, blue in flower, but withering and remaining withered till the winter scatters it ; the *saltwort*, both simple and shrubby ; a few kinds of grass changed by their soil and atmosphere, and low plants of two or three denominations undistinguished in a general view of the scenery ;—such is the vegetation of the fen when it is at a small distance from the ocean ; and in this case there arise from it effluvia strong and peculiar, half-saline, half-putrid, which would be considered by most people as offensive, and by some as dangerous ; but there are others to whom singularity of taste or association of ideas has rendered it agreeable and pleasant.

The few dull flowers that o'er the place are  
spread

Partake the nature of their fenny bed ;  
Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,  
Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume  
Here the dwarf salallows creep, the septfoil  
harsh,

And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh ;  
Low on the ear the distant billows sound,  
And just in view appears their stony bound ;  
No hedge nor tree conceals the glowing sun,  
Birds, save a wat'ry tribe, the district shun,  
Nor chirp among the reeds where bitter waters  
run.

' Various as beauteous, Nature, is thy face,'  
Exclaim'd Orlando: 'all that grows has grace;  
All are appropriate—bog, and marsh, and fen,  
Are only poor to undiscerning men ;  
Here may the nice and curious eye explore  
How Nature's hand adorns the rushy moor ;  
Here the rare moss in secret shade is found,  
Here the sweet myrtle of the shaking ground ;  
Beauties are these that from the view retire,  
But well repay th' attention they require ;  
For these my Laura will her home forsake,  
And all the pleasures they afford partake.'

Again the country was enclosed, a wide  
And sandy road has banks on either side ;  
Where, lo ! a hollow on the left appear'd,  
And there a gipsy-tribe their tent had rear'd ;  
'Twas open spread, to catch the morning sun,  
And they had now their early meal begun,  
When two brown boys just left their grassy  
seat,

The early trav'ler with their pray'rs to greet :  
While yet Orlando held his pence in hand,  
He saw their sister on her duty stand ;  
Some twelve years old, demure, affected, sly,  
Prepared the force of early powers to try ;  
Sudden a look of languor he descries,  
And well-feign'd apprehension in her eyes ;  
Train'd but yet savage, in her speaking face  
He mark'd the features of her vagrant race ;  
When a light laugh and roguish leer express'd  
The vice implanted in her youthful breast :  
Forth from the tent her elder brother came,  
Who seem'd offended, yet forbore to blame  
The young designer, but could only trace  
The looks of pity in the trav'ler's face :  
Within, the father, who from fences nigh  
Had brought the fuel for the fire's supply,  
Watch'd now the feeble blaze, and stood  
dejected by :

On ragged rug, just borrow'd from the bed,  
And by the hand of coarse indulgence fed,  
In dirty patchwork negligently dress'd,  
Reclined the wife, an infant at her breast ;  
In her wild face some touch of grace remain'd,  
Of vigour palsied and of beauty stain'd ;  
Her blood-shot eyes on her unheeding mate  
Were wrathful turn'd, and seem'd her wants  
to state,

Cursing his tardy aid—her mother there  
With gipsy-state engross'd the only chair ;  
Solemn and dull her look ; with such she  
stands,

And reads the milk-maid's fortune in her  
hands,

Tracing the lines of life ; assumed through  
years,

Each feature now the steady falsehood wears ;  
With hard and savage eye she views the food,  
And grudging pinches their intruding brood ;  
Last in the group, the worn-out grandsire  
sits

Neglected, lost, and living but by fits ;  
Useless, despised, his worthless labours done,  
And half protected by the vicious son,  
Who half supports him ; he with heavy glance  
Views the young ruffians who around him  
dance ;

And, by the sadness in his face, appears  
To trace the progress of their future years :  
Through what strange course of misery, vice,  
deceit,

Must wildly wander each unpractised cheat !  
What shame and grief, what punishment and  
pain,

Sport of fierce passions, must each child sus-  
tain—

Ere they like him approach their latter end,  
Without a hope, a comfort, or a friend !

But this Orlando felt not ; ' Rogues,' said  
he,

' Doubtless they are, but merry rogues they  
be ;

They wander round the land, and be it true,  
They break the laws—then let the laws pursue  
The wanton idlers ; for the life they live,  
Acquit I cannot, but I can forgive.'

This said, a portion from his purse was  
thrown,

And every heart seem'd happy like his own.

He hurried forth, for now the town was  
nigh—

' The happiest man of mortal men am I.'

Thou art ! but change in every state is near,  
(So while the wretched hope, the blest may  
fear) ;

' Say, where is Laura ? '—' That her words  
must show,'

A lass replied ; ' read this, and thou shalt  
know ! '

' What, gone ! '—her friend insisted—  
' forced to go :—

Is vex'd, was teased, could not refuse her !  
—No ? '

' But you can follow : ' ' Yes : ' ' The miles  
are few,

The way is pleasant ; will you come ?—Adieu !  
Thy Laura ! ' ' No ! I feel I must resign  
The pleasing hope, thou hadst been here, if  
mine :

A lady was it ?—Was no brother there ?  
But why should I afflict me if there were ? '  
' The way is pleasant : ' ' What to me the  
way ?

I cannot reach her till the close of day.  
My dumb companion ! is it thus we speed ?  
Not I from grief nor thou from toil art freed ;  
Still art thou doom'd to travel and to pine,  
For my vexation—What a fate is mine !

' Gone to a friend, she tells me ; I commend  
Her purpose ; means she to a female friend ?  
By Heaven, I wish she suffer'd half the pain  
Of hope protracted through the day in vain :  
Shall I persist to see th' ungrateful maid ?  
Yes, I will see her, slight her, and upbraid :  
What ! in the very hour ? She knew the time,  
And doubtless chose it to increase her crime.'

Forth rode Orlando by a river's side,  
Inland and winding, smooth, and full and  
wide,

That roll'd majestic on, in one soft-flowing  
tide ;

The bottom gravel, flow'ry were the banks,  
Tall willows, waving in their broken ranks ;  
The road, now near, now distant, winding led  
By lovely meadows which the waters fed ;  
He pass'd the way-side inn, the village spire,  
Nor stopp'd to gaze, to question, or admire ;  
On either side the rural mansions stood,  
With hedge-row trees, and hills high-crown'd  
with wood,

And many a delicious stream that reach'd the  
nobler flood.

' I hate these scenes,' Orlando angry cried,  
' And these proud farmers ! yes, I hate their  
pride :

See ! that sleek fellow, how he strides along,  
Strong as an ox, and ignorant as strong ;  
Can yon close crops a single eye detain  
But his who counts the profits of the grain ?  
And these vile beans with deleterious smell,  
Where is their beauty ? can a mortal tell ?  
These deep fat meadows I detest ; it shocks  
One's feelings there to see the grazing ox ;—  
For slaughter fatted, as a lady's smile  
Rejoices man, and means his death the while.  
Lo ! now the sons of labour ! every day  
Employ'd in toil, and vex'd in every way ;  
Theirs is but mirth assumed, and they conceal,

In their affected joys, the ills they feel :  
I hate these long green lanes ; there's nothing  
seen

In this vile country but eternal green ;  
Woods ! waters ! meadows ! Will they never  
end ?

'Tis a vile prospect :—Gone to see a  
friend !—

Still on he rode ! a mansion fair and tall  
Rose on his view—the pride of Loddon-Hall :  
Spread o'er the park he saw the grazing steer,  
The full-fed steed, the herds of bounding deer :  
On a clear stream the vivid sunbeams play'd,  
Through noble elms, and on the surface made  
That moving picture, checker'd light and  
shade ;

Th' attended children, there indulged to stray,  
Enjoy'd and gave new beauty to the day ;  
Whose happy parents from their room were  
seen

Pleased with the sportive idlers on the green.

' Well ! ' said Orlando, ' and for one so  
bless'd,

A thousand reasoning wretches are distress'd ;  
Nay, these so seeming glad, are grieving like  
the rest :

Man is a cheat—and all but strive to hide  
Their inward misery by their outward pride.  
What do yon lofty gates and walls contain,  
But fruitless means to soothe unconquer'd  
pain ?

The parents read each infant daughter's  
smile,

Form'd to seduce, encouraged to beguile ;  
They view the boys unconscious of their fate,  
Sure to be tempted, sure to take the bait ;  
These will be Lauras, sad Orlando's these—  
There's guilt and grief in all one hears and  
sees.'

Our traveller, lab'ring up a hill, look'd  
down

Upon a lively, busy, pleasant town ;  
All he beheld were there alert, alive,  
The busiest bees that ever stock'd a hive :  
A pair were married, and the bells aloud  
Proclaim'd their joy, and joyful seem'd the  
crowd ;

And now proceeding on his way, he spied,  
Bound by strong ties, the bridegroom and the  
bride :

Each by some friends attended, near they  
drew,

And spleen beheld them with prophetic view.  
' Married ! nay, mad ! ' Orlando cried in  
scorn ;

' Another wretch on this unlucky morn :  
What are this foolish mirth, these idle joys ?  
Attempts to stifle doubt and fear by noise :  
To me these robes, expressive of delight,  
Foreshow distress, and only grief excite ;  
And for these cheerful friends, will they  
behold

Their wailing brood in sickness, want, and  
cold ;

And his proud look, and her soft languid air  
Will—but I spare you—go, unhappy pair ! '

And now approaching to the journey's end,  
His anger fails, his thoughts to kindness tend,  
He less offended feels, and rather fears  
t' offend :

Now gently rising, hope contends with doubt,  
And casts a sunshine on the views without ;  
And still reviving joy and lingering gloom  
Alternate empire o'er his soul assume ;  
Till, long perplex'd, he now began to find  
The softer thoughts engross the settling mind :  
He saw the mansion, and should quickly see  
His Laura's self—and angry could he be ?

No ! the resentment melted all away——

' For this my grief a single smile will pay,'  
Our traveller cried ;—' And why should it  
offend,

That one so good should have a pressing  
friend ?

Grieve not, my heart ! to find a favourite guest  
Thy pride and boast—ye selfish sorrows, rest ;  
She will be kind, and I again be blest.'

While gentler passions thus his bosom  
sway'd,

He reach'd the mansion, and he saw the  
maid ;

' My Laura ! '—' My Orlando !—this is kind ;  
In truth I came persuaded, not inclined :  
Our friends' amusement let us now pursue,  
And I to-morrow will return with you.'

Like man entranced, the happy lover  
stood—

' As Laura wills, for she is kind and good ;  
Ever the truest, gentlest, fairest, best—  
As Laura wills, I see her and am blest.'

Home went the lovers through that busy  
place,  
By Loddon-Hall, the country's pride and  
grace ;

By the rich meadows where the oxen fed,  
Through the green vale that form'd the river's  
bed ;

And by unnumber'd cottages and farms,  
That have for musing minds unnumber'd  
charms ;

And how affected by the view of these  
Was then Orlando—did they pain or please ?

Nor pain nor pleasure could they yield—  
and why ?

The mind was fill'd, was happy, and the  
eye

Roved o'er the fleeting views, that but  
appear'd to die.

Alone Orlando on the morrow paced  
The well-known road ; the gypsy-tent he  
traced ;

The dam high-raised, the reedy dikes between,  
The scatter'd hovels on the barren green,  
The burning sand, the fields of thin-set rye,  
Mock'd by the useless Flora, blooming by ;  
And last the heath with all its various bloom,  
And the close lanes that led the traveller  
home.

Then could these scenes the former joys  
renew ?

Or was there now dejection in the view ?—  
Nor one or other would they yield—and why ?  
The mind was absent, and the vacant eye  
Wander'd o'er viewless scenes, that but ap-  
pear'd to die.



## TALE XI. EDWARD SHORE

Seem they grave and learned ?  
 Why, so didst thou. . . Seem they religious ?  
 Why, so didst thou ; or are they spare in diet,  
 Free from gross passion, or of mirth or anger,  
 Constant in spirit, not swerving with the  
 blood,

Garnish'd and deck'd in modest complement,  
 Not working with the eye without the ear,  
 And but in purged judgment trusting neither  
 Such and so finely bolted didst thou seem.

*Henry V, Act ii, Scene 2.*

Better I were distract,  
 So should my thoughts be sever'd from my  
 griefs,  
 And woes by wrong imaginations lose  
 The knowledge of themselves.

*King Lear, Act iv, Scene 6.*

GENIUS ! thou gift of Heav'n ! thou light  
 divine !

Amid what dangers art thou doom'd to shine !  
 Oft will the body's weakness check thy force,  
 Oft damp thy vigour, and impede thy course ;  
 And trembling nerves compel thee to restrain  
 Thy nobler efforts, to contend with pain ;  
 Or Want (sad guest ! ) will in thy presence  
 come,

And breathe around her melancholy gloom ;  
 To life's low cares will thy proud thought  
 confine,  
 And make her sufferings, her impatience,  
 thine.

Evil and strong, seducing passions prey  
 On soaring minds, and win them from their  
 way ;

Who then to vice the subject spirits give,  
 And in the service of the conqueror live ;  
 Like captive Samson making sport for all,  
 Who fear'd their strength, and glory in their  
 fall.

Genius, with virtue, still may lack the aid  
 Implored by humbler minds and hearts  
 afraid ;

May leave to timid souls the shield and sword  
 Of the tried faith, and the resistless word ;  
 Amid a world of dangers venturing forth,  
 Frail, but yet fearless, proud in conscious  
 worth,

Till strong temptation, in some fatal time,  
 Assails the heart, and wins the soul to crime ;

When left by honour, and by sorrow spent,  
 Unused to pray, unable to repent,  
 The nobler powers that once exalted high  
 Th' aspiring man, shall then degraded lie :  
 Reason, through anguish, shall her throne  
 forsake,

And strength of mind but stronger madness  
 make.

When EDWARD SHORE had reach'd his  
 twentieth year,

He felt his bosom light, his conscience clear ;  
 Applause at school the youthful hero gain'd,  
 And trials there with manly strength sus-  
 tain'd :

With prospects bright upon the world he  
 came,

Pure love of virtue, strong desire of fame :  
 Men watch'd the way his lofty mind would  
 take,

And all foretold the progress he would make.

Boast of these friends, to older men a guide,  
 Proud of his parts, but gracious in his pride ;  
 He bore a gay good-nature in his face,  
 And in his air were dignity and grace ;  
 Dress that became his state and years he wore,  
 And sense and spirit shone in Edward Shore.

Thus while admiring friends the youth  
 beheld,

His own disgust their forward hopes repell'd ;  
 For he unfix'd, unfixing, look'd around,  
 And no employment but in seeking found ;  
 He gave his restless thoughts to views refined,  
 And shrank from worldly cares with wounded  
 mind.

Rejecting trade, awhile he dwelt on laws,  
 ' But who could plead, if unapproved the  
 cause ? '

A doubting, dismal tribe physicians seem'd ;  
 Divines o'er texts and disputations dream'd ;  
 War and its glory he perhaps could love,  
 But there again he must the cause approve.

Our hero thought no deed should gain  
 applause,

Where timid virtue found support in laws ;  
 He to all good would soar, would fly all sin,  
 By the pure prompting of the will within ;  
 ' Who needs a law that binds him not to  
 steal,'

Ask'd the young teacher, ' can he rightly feel ?

To curb the will, or arm in honour's cause,  
Or aid the weak—are these enforced by laws ?  
Should we a foul, ungenerous action dread,  
Because a law condemns th' adulterous bed ?  
Or fly pollution, not for fear of stain,  
But that some statute tells us to refrain ?  
The grosser herd in ties like these we bind,  
In virtue's freedom moves th' enlighten'd mind.'

'Man's heart deceives him,' said a friend :  
'Of course,'

Replied the youth, 'but, has it power to force?  
Unless it forces, call it as you will,  
It is but wish, and proneness to the ill.'

'Art thou not tempted ?' 'Do I fall ?'  
said Shore :

'The pure have fallen.'—'Then are pure no more :

While reason guides me, I shall walk aright,  
Nor need a steadier hand, or stronger light ;  
Nor this in dread of awful threats, design'd  
For the weak spirit and the grov'ling mind ;  
But that, engaged by thoughts and views sublime,

I wage free war with grossness and with crime.'

Thus look'd he proudly on the vulgar crew,  
Whom statutes govern, and whom fears subdue.

Faith, with his virtue, he indeed profess'd,  
But doubts deprived his ardent mind of rest ;

Reason, his sovereign mistress, failed to show  
Light through the mazes of the world below ;  
Questions arose, and they surpass'd the skill  
Of his sole aid, and would be dubious still ;  
These to discuss he sought no common guide,  
But to the doubters in his doubts applied ;  
When all together might in freedom speak,  
And their loved truth with mutual ardour seek.

Alas ! though men who feel their eyes decay  
Take more than common pains to find their way,

Yet, when for this they ask each other's aid,  
Their mutual purpose is the more delay'd :  
Of all their doubts, their reasoning clear'd not one,

Still the same spots were present in the sun ;  
Still the same scruples haunted Edward's mind,

Who found no rest, nor took the means to find.

But though with shaken faith, and slave to fame,  
Vain and aspiring on the world he came ;  
Yet was he studious, serious, moral, grave,  
No passion's victim, and no system's slave ;  
Vice he opposed, indulgence he disdained,  
And o'er each sense in conscious triumph reign'd.

Who often reads, will sometimes wish to write,  
And Shore would yield instruction and delight :

A serious drama he design'd, but found  
'Twas tedious travelling in that gloomy ground ;

A deep and solemn story he would try,  
But grew ashamed of ghosts, and laid it by ;  
Sermons he wrote, but they who knew his creed,

Or knew it not, were ill disposed to read ;  
And he would lastly be the nation's guide,  
But, studying, fail'd to fix upon a side ;  
Fame he desired, and talents he possess'd,  
But loved not labour, though he could not rest,

Nor firmly fix the vacillating mind,  
That, ever working, could no centre find.

'Tis thus a sanguine reader loves to trace  
The Nile forth rushing on his glorious race ;  
Calm and secure the fancied traveller goes  
Through sterile deserts and by threat'ning foes ;

He thinks not then of Afric's scorching sands,  
Th' Arabian sea, the Abyssinian bands ;  
Fasils \* and Michaels, and the robbers all,  
Whom we politely chiefs and heroes call :  
He of success alone delights to think,  
He views that fount, he stands upon the brink,  
And drinks a fancied draught, exulting so to drink.

In his own room, and with his books around,  
His lively mind its chief employment found ;  
Then idly busy, quietly employ'd,  
And, lost to life, his visions were enjoy'd :

\* Fasil was a rebel chief, and Michael the general of the royal army in Abyssinia, when Mr. Bruce visited that country. In all other respects their characters were nearly similar. They are both represented as cruel and treacherous ; and even the apparently strong distinction of loyal and rebellious is in a great measure set aside, when we are informed that Fasil was an open enemy, and Michael an insolent and ambitious controller of the royal person and family.

Yet still he took a keen inquiring view  
Of all that crowds neglect, desire, pursue ;  
And thus abstracted, curious, still, serene,  
He, unemploy'd, beheld life's shifting scene ;  
Still more averse from vulgar joys and cares,  
Still more unfitted for the world's affairs.

There was a house where Edward oft times  
went,  
And social hours in pleasant trifling spent ;  
He read, conversed and reason'd, sang and  
play'd,

And all were happy while the idler stay'd ;  
Too happy one, for thence arose the pain,  
Till this engaging trifier came again.

But did he love ? We answer, day by day,  
The loving feet would take th' accustom'd  
way,

The amorous eye would rove as if in quest  
Of something rare, and on the mansion rest ;  
The same soft passion touch'd the gentle  
tongue,

And Anna's charms in tender notes were  
sung ;

The ear too seem'd to feel the common flame,  
Sooth'd and delighted with the fair one's  
name ;

And thus as love each other part possess'd,  
The heart, no doubt, its sovereign power  
confessed.

Pleased in her sight, the youth required no  
more ;

Not rich himself, he saw the damsel poor ;  
And he too wisely, nay, too kindly loved,  
To pain the being whom his soul approved.

A serious friend our cautious youth pos-  
sess'd,

And at his table sat a welcome guest ;  
Both unemploy'd, it was their chief delight  
To read what free and daring authors write ;  
Authors who loved from common views to soar,  
And seek the fountains never traced before ;  
Truth they profess'd, yet often left the true  
And beaten prospect, for the wild and new.  
His chosen friend his fiftieth year had seen,  
His fortune easy, and his air serene ;  
Deist and atheist call'd ; for few agreed  
What were his notions, principles, or creed ;  
His mind reposed not, for he hated rest,  
But all things made a query or a jest ;  
Perplex'd himself, he ever sought to prove  
That man is doom'd in endless doubt to rove ;  
Himself in darkness he profess'd to be,  
And would maintain that not a man could see.

The youthful friend, dissentient, reason'd  
still

Of the soul's prowess, and the subject will ;  
Of virtue's beauty, and of honour's force,  
And a warm zeal gave life to his discourse :  
Since from his feelings all his fire arose  
And he had interest in the themes he chose.

The friend, indulging a sarcastic smile,  
Said—' Dear enthusiast ! thou wilt change  
thy style,

When man's delusions, errors, crimes, deceit,  
No more distress thee, and no longer cheat.

Yet lo ! this cautious man, so coolly wise,  
On a young beauty fix'd unguarded eyes ;  
And her he married : Edward at the view  
Bade to his cheerful visits long adieu ;  
But haply err'd, for this engaging bride

No mirth suppress'd, but other cause sup-  
plied :

And when she saw the friends, by reasoning  
long,

Confused if right, and positive if wrong,  
With playful speech and smile, that spoke  
delight,

She made them careless both of wrong and  
right.

This gentle damsel gave consent to wed,  
With school and school-day dinners in her  
head :

She now was promised choice of daintiest  
food,

And costly dress, that made her sovereign  
good ;

With walks on hilly heath to banish spleen,  
And summer-visits when the roads were clean.  
All these she loved, to these she gave consent,  
And she was married to her heart's content.

Their manner this—the friends together  
read,

Till books a cause for disputation bred ;  
Debate then follow'd, and the vapour'd child  
Declared they argued till her head was wild ;  
And strange to her it was that mortal brain  
Could seek the trial, or endure the pain.

Then as the friend reposed, the younger  
pair

Sat down to cards, and play'd beside his chair  
Till he awaking, to his books applied,  
Or heard the music of th' obedient bride :  
If mild the evening, in the fields they stray'd,  
And their own flock with partial eye survey'd ;  
But oft the husband, to indulgence prone,  
Resumed his book, and bade them walk alone.

'Do, my kind Edward ! I must take mine ease,  
Name the dear girl the planets and the trees ;  
Tell her what warblers pour their evening song,  
What insects flutter, as you walk along ;  
Teach her to fix the roving thoughts, to bind  
The wandering sense, and methodize the mind.'

This was obey'd ; and oft when this was done,  
They calmly gazed on the declining sun ;  
In silence saw the glowing landscape fade,  
Or, sitting, sang beneath the arbour's shade :  
Till rose the moon, and on each youthful face  
Shed a soft beauty, and a dangerous grace.

When the young wife beheld in long debate  
The friends, all careless as she seeming sate ;  
It soon appear'd, there was in one combined  
The nobler person and the richer mind :  
He wore no wig, no grisly beard was seen,  
And none beheld him careless or unclean ;  
Or watch'd him sleeping :—we indeed have heard

Of sleeping beauty, and it has appear'd ;  
'Tis seen in infants—there indeed we find  
The features soften'd by the slumbering mind ;

But other beauties, when disposed to sleep,  
Should from the eye of keen inspector keep :  
The lovely nymph who would her swain surprise,

May close her mouth, but not conceal her eyes ;  
Sleep from the fairest face some beauty takes,  
And all the homely features homelier makes ;  
So thought our wife, beholding with a sigh  
Her sleeping spouse, and Edward smiling by.

A sick relation for the husband sent,  
Without delay the friendly sceptic went ;  
Nor fear'd the youthful pair, for he had seen  
The wife untroubled, and the friend serene :  
No selfish purpose in his roving eyes,  
No vile deception in her fond replies :  
So judged the husband, and with judgment true,

For neither yet the guilt or danger knew.

What now remain'd ? but they again should play

Th' accustom'd game, and walk th' accustomed way ;

With careless freedom should converse or read,  
And the friend's absence neither fear nor heed :

But rather now they seem'd confused, constrain'd ;  
Within their room still restless they remain'd,  
And painfully they felt, and knew each other pain'd.—

Ah ! foolish men ! how could ye thus depend,  
One on himself, the other on his friend ?

The youth with troubled eye the lady saw,

Yet felt too brave, too daring to withdraw ;  
While she, with tuneless hand the jarring keys  
Touching, was not one moment at her ease :  
Now would she walk, and call her friendly guide,

Now speak of rain and cast her cloak aside ;  
Seize on a book, unconscious what she read,  
And restless still, to new resources fled ;  
Then laugh'd aloud, then tried to look serene,  
And ever changed, and every change was seen.

Painful it is to dwell on deeds of shame—  
The trying day was past, another came ;  
The third was all remorse, confusion, dread,  
And (all too late !) the fallen hero fled.

Then felt the youth, in that seducing time,  
How feebly honour guards the heart from crime :

Small is his native strength ; man needs the stay,

The strength imparted in the trying day ;  
For all that honour brings against the force  
Of headlong passion, aids its rapid course ;  
Its slight resistance but provokes the fire,  
As wood-work stops the flame, and then conveys it higher.

The husband came ; a wife by guilt made bold

Had, meeting, sooth'd him, as in days of old ;  
But soon this fact transpired ; her strong distress,  
And his friend's absence, left him nought to guess.

Still cool, though grieved, thus prudence bade him write—

'I cannot pardon, and I will not fight ;  
Thou art too poor a culprit for the laws,  
And I too faulty to support my cause :  
All must be punish'd ; I must sigh alone,  
At home thy victim for her guilt atone ;

And thou, unhappy ! virtuous now no more,  
Must loss of fame, peace, purity deplore ;  
Sinners with praise will pierce thee to the  
heart,

And saints deriding, tell thee what thou art.  
Such was his fall ; and Edward, from that  
time,

Felt in full force the censure and the crime—  
Despised, ashamed ; his noble views before,  
And his proud thoughts, degraded him the  
more :

Should he repent—would that conceal his  
shame ?

Could peace be his ? It perish'd with his  
fame :

Himself he scorn'd, nor could his crime for-  
give ;

He fear'd to die, yet felt ashamed to live :  
Grieved, but not contrite was his heart ;  
oppress'd,

Not broken ; not converted, but distress'd ;  
He wanted will to bend the stubborn knee,  
He wanted light the cause of ill to see,  
To learn how frail is man, how humble then  
should be ;

For faith he had not, or a faith too weak  
To gain the help that humbled sinners seek ;  
Else had he pray'd—to an offended God  
His tears had flown a penitential flood  
Though far astray, he would have heard the  
call

Of mercy—' Come ! return, thou prodigal ; '  
Then, though confused, distress'd, ashamed,  
afraid,

Still had the trembling penitent obey'd ;  
Though faith had fainted, when assail'd by  
fear,

Hope to the soul had whisper'd, ' Persevere ! '  
Till in his Father's house an humbled guest,  
He would have found forgiveness, comfort,  
rest.

But all this joy was to our youth denied  
By his fierce passions and his daring pride ;  
And shame and doubt impell'd him in a  
course,

Once so abhorr'd, with unresisted force.  
Proud minds and guilty, whom their crimes  
oppress,

Fly to new crimes for comfort and redress ;  
So found our fallen youth a short relief  
In wine, the opiate guilt applies to grief,—  
From fleeting mirth that o'er the bottle lives,  
From the false joy its inspiration gives ;

And from associates pleased to find a friend,  
With powers to lead them, gladden, and  
defend,

In all those scenes where transient ease is  
found,

For minds whom sins oppress, and sorrows  
wound.

Wine is like anger ; for it makes us strong,  
Blind and impatient, and it leads us wrong ;  
The strength is quickly lost, we feel the error  
long :

Thus led, thus strengthen'd in an evil cause,  
For folly pleading, sought the youth ap-  
plause ;

Sad for a time, then eloquently wild,  
He gaily spoke as his companions smiled ;  
Lightly he rose, and with his former grace  
Proposed some doubt, and argued on the case ;  
Fate and fore-knowledge were his favourite  
themes—

How vain man's purpose, how absurd his  
schemes :

' Whatever is, was ere our birth decreed ;  
We think our actions from ourselves proceed,  
And idly we lament th' inevitable deed ;  
It seems our own, but there's a power above  
Directs the motion, nay, that makes us move ;  
Nor good nor evil can you beings name,  
Who are but rooks and castles in the game ;  
Superior natures with their puppets play,  
Till, bagg'd or buried, all are swept away.'

Such were the notions of a mind to ill  
Now prone, but ardent, and determined still :  
Of joy now eager, as before of fame,  
And screen'd by folly when assail'd by shame,  
Deeply he sank ; obey'd each passion's call,  
And used his reason to defend them all.

Shall I proceed, and step by step relate  
The odious progress of a sinner's fate ?  
No—let me rather hasten to the time  
(Sure to arrive) when misery waits on crime.

With virtue, prudence fled ; what Shore  
possess'd

Was sold, was spent, and he was now dis-  
tress'd :

And Want, unwelcome stranger pale and  
wan,

Met with her haggard looks the hurried man ;  
His pride felt keenly what he must expect  
From useless pity and from cold neglect.

Struck by new terrors, from his friends he  
fled,

And wept his woes upon a restless bed ;

Retiring late, at early hour to rise,  
With shrunken features, and with bloodshot  
eyes :

If sleep one moment closed the dismal view,  
Fancy her terrors built upon the true ;  
And night and day had their alternate  
woes,

That baffled pleasure, and that mock'd re-  
pose ;

Till to despair and anguish was consign'd  
The wreck and ruin of a noble mind.

Now seized for debt, and lodged within a jail,  
He tried his friendships, and he found them  
fail ;

Then fail'd his spirits, and his thoughts were  
all

Fix'd on his sins, his sufferings, and his fall :  
His ruffled mind was pictured in his face,  
Once the fair seat of dignity and grace :  
Great was the danger of a man so prone  
To think of madness, and to think alone ;  
Yet pride still lived, and struggled to sustain  
The drooping spirit and the roving brain ;  
But this too fail'd : a friend his freedom  
gave,

And sent him help the threat'ning world to  
brave ;

Gave solid counsel what to seek or flee,  
But still would stranger to his person be :  
In vain ! the truth determined to explore,  
He traced the friend whom he had wrong'd  
before.

This was too much ; both aided and advised  
By one who shunn'd him, pitied, and de-  
spised ;

He bore it not ; 'twas a deciding stroke,  
And on his reason like a torrent broke :  
In dreadful stillness he appear'd awhile,  
With vacant horror and a ghastly smile ;  
Then rose at once into the frantic rage,  
That force controll'd not, nor could love  
assuage.

Friends now appear'd, but in the man was  
seen

The angry maniac, with vindictive mien ;  
Too late their pity gave to care and skill  
The hurried mind and ever-wandering will ;  
Unnoticed pass'd all time, and not a ray  
Of reason broke on his benighted way ;  
But now he spurn'd the straw in pure disdain,  
And now laughed loudly at the clinking chain.

Then as its wrath subsided, by degrees  
The mind sank slowly to infantine ease ;

To playful folly, and to causeless joy,  
Speech without aim, and without end, em-  
ploy ;

He drew fantastic figures on the wall,  
And gave some wild relation of them all ;  
With brutal shape he join'd the human face,  
And idiot smiles approved the motley race.

Harmless at length th' unhappy man was  
found,

The spirit settled, but the reason drown'd ;  
And all the dreadful tempest died away,  
To the dull stillness of the misty day.

And now his freedom he attain'd—if free,  
The lost to reason, truth, and hope, can be ;  
His friends, or wearied with the charge, or  
sure

The harmless wretch was now beyond a cure,  
Gave him to wander where he pleased, and  
find

His own resources for the eager mind ;  
The playful children of the place he meets,  
Playful with them he rambles through the  
streets ;

In all they need, his stronger arm he lends,  
And his lost mind to these approving friends.

That gentle maid, whom once the youth  
had loved,

Is now with mild religious pity moved ;  
Kindly she chides his boyish flights, while he  
Will for a moment fix'd and pensive be ;  
And as she trembling speaks, his lively eyes  
Explore her looks, he listens to her sighs ;  
Charm'd by her voice, th' harmonious sounds  
invade

His clouded mind, and for a time persuade :  
Like a pleased infant, who has newly caught  
From the maternal glance a gleam of thought,  
He stands enrapt, the half-known voice to  
hear,

And starts, half-conscious, at the falling tear.  
Rarely from town, nor then unwatch'd, he  
goes,

In darker mood, as if to hide his woes ;  
Returning soon, he with impatience seeks  
His youthful friends, and shouts, and sings,  
and speaks ;

Speaks a wild speech with action all as wild—  
The children's leader, and himself a child ;  
He spins their top, or, at their bidding, bends  
His back, while o'er it leap his laughing  
friends ;

Simple and weak, he acts the boy once more,  
And heedless children call him Silly Shore.

## TALE XII. 'SQUIRE THOMAS; OR, THE PRECIPITATE CHOICE

Such smiling rogues as these,  
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain,  
Which are too intrinse t' unloose—

*King Lear*, Act ii, Scene 2.

My other self, my counsel's consistory,  
My oracle, my prophet, . . .  
I as a child will go by thy direction.

*Richard III*, Act ii, Scene 2.

If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain;  
if I do not love her, I am a Jew.

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act ii, Scene 3.

Women are soft, mild, pitiful and flexible;  
Thou stern, obdurate, flinty, rough, remorse-  
less.

3 *Henry VI*, Act i, Scene 4.

He must be told on't, and he shall; the office  
Becomes a woman best; I'll take it upon  
me;

If I prove honey-mouth'd, let my tongue  
blister.

*Winter's Tale*, Act ii, Scene 2.

Disguise—I see thou art a wickedness.

*Twelfth Night*, Act ii, Scene 2.

'SQUIRE THOMAS flatter'd long a wealthy aunt,  
Who left him all that she could give or grant:  
Ten years he tried, with all his craft and skill,  
To fix the sovereign lady's varying will;  
Ten years enduring at her board to sit,  
He meekly listen'd to her tales and wit;  
He took the meanest office man can take,  
And his aunt's vices for her money's sake:  
By many a threat'ning hint she waked his  
fear,

And he was pain'd to see a rival near;  
Yet all the taunts of her contemptuous pride  
He bore, nor found his grow'ling spirit tried:  
Nay, when she wish'd his parents to traduce,  
Fawning he smiled, and justice call'd  
th' abuse;

'They taught you nothing; are you not, at  
best,'

Said the proud dame, 'a trifter, and a jest?  
Confess you are a fool!'—he bow'd and he  
confess'd.

This vex'd him much, but could not always  
last:

The dame is buried, and the trial past.

There was a female, who had courted long  
Her cousin's gifts, and deeply felt the wrong;  
By a vain boy forbidden to attend  
The private counsels of her wealthy friend,  
She vow'd revenge, nor should that crafty boy  
In triumph undisturb'd his spoils enjoy;  
He heard, he smiled, and when the will was  
read,

Kindly dismiss'd the kindred of the dead;  
'The dear deceased,' he call'd her, and the  
crowd  
Moved off with curses deep and threat'nings  
loud.

The youth retired, and, with a mind at ease,  
Found he was rich, and fancied he must  
please:

He might have pleased, and to his comfort  
found

The wife he wish'd, if he had sought around;  
For there were lasses of his own degree,  
With no more hatred to the state than he:  
But he had courted spleen and age so long,  
His heart refused to woo the fair and young;  
So long attended on caprice and whim,  
He thought attention now was due to him;  
And as his flattery pleased the wealthy dame,  
Heir to the wealth, he might the flattery  
claim;

But this the fair, with one accord, denied,  
Nor waved for man's caprice the sex's pride:  
There is a season when to them is due  
Worship and awe, and they will claim it too:  
'Fathers,' they cry, 'long hold us in their  
chain,

Nay, tyrant brothers claim a right to reign;  
Uncles and guardians we in turn obey,  
And husbands rule with ever-during sway;  
Short is the time when lovers at the feet  
Of beauty kneel, and own the slavery sweet;  
And shall we this our triumph, this the aim  
And boast of female power, forbear to claim?  
No! we demand that homage, that respect,  
Or the proud rebel punish and reject.'

Our hero, still too indolent, too nice  
To pay for beauty the accustom'd price,  
No less forbore t' address the humbler maid,  
Whom might have yielded with the price unpaid;

But lived, himself to humour and to please,  
To count his money, and enjoy his ease.

It pleased a neighbouring 'squire to recommend

A faithful youth, as servant to his friend ;  
Nay, more than servant, whom he praised  
for parts

Ductile yet strong, and for the best of hearts ;  
One who might ease him in his small affairs,  
With tenants, tradesmen, taxes, and repairs ;  
Answer his letters, look to all his dues,  
And entertain him with discourse and news.

The 'squire believed, and found the trusted youth

A very pattern for his care and truth ;  
Not for his virtues to be praised alone,  
But for a modest mien and humble tone ;  
Assenting always, but as if he meant  
Only to strength of reasons to assent :  
For was he stubborn, and retain'd his doubt,  
Till the more subtle 'squire had forced it out ;  
' Nay, still was right, but he perceived that strong  
And powerful minds could make the right the wrong.'

When the 'squire's thoughts on some fair damsel dwelt,

The faithful friend his apprehensions felt ;  
It would rejoice his faithful heart to find  
A lady suited to his master's mind ;  
But who deserved that master ? who would prove

That hers was pure, uninterested love ?  
Although a servant, he would scorn to take  
A countess, till she suffer'd for his sake ;  
Some tender spirit, humble, faithful, true,  
Such, my dear master ! must be sought for you.

Six months had pass'd, and not a lady seen,  
With just this love, 'twixt fifty and fifteen ;  
All seem'd his doctrine or his pride to shun,  
All would be woo'd before they would be won ;  
When the chance naming of a race and fair,  
Our 'squire disposed to take his pleasure there:  
The friend profess'd, ' although he first began  
To hint the thing, it seem'd a thoughtless plan:  
The roads, he fear'd, were foul, the days were short,

The village far, and yet there might be sport.'

' What ! you of roads and starless nights  
afraid ?

You think to govern ! you to be obey'd !'  
Smiling he spoke, the humble friend declared  
His soul's obedience, and to go prepared.

The place was distant, but with great delight  
They saw a race, and hail'd the glorious sight :  
The 'squire exulted, and declared the ride  
Had amply paid, and he was satisfied.

They gazed, they feasted, and, in happy mood,  
Homeward return'd, and hastening as they rode ;

For short the day, and sudden was the change  
From light to darkness, and the way was strange ;

Our hero soon grew peevish, then distress'd ;  
He dreaded darkness, and he sigh'd for rest :  
Going, they pass'd a village ; but, alas !

Returning saw no village to repass ;  
The 'squire remember'd too a noble hall,  
Large as a church, and whiter than its wall :

This he had noticed as they rode along,  
And justly reason'd that their road was wrong.  
George, full of awe, was modest in reply—

' The fault was his, 'twas folly to deny ;  
And of his master's safety were he sure,  
There was no grievance he would not endure.'  
This made his peace with the relenting 'squire,  
Whose thoughts yet dwelt on supper and a fire ;

When, as they reach'd a long and pleasant green,

Dwellings of men, and next a man, were seen.  
' My friend,' said George, ' to travellers astray

Point out an inn, and guide us on the way.'  
The man look'd up ; ' Surprising ! can it be  
My master's son ? as I'm alive, 'tis he.'

' How ! Robin,' George replied, ' and are we near

My father's house ? how strangely things appear !—

Dear sir, though wanderers, we at last are right :

Let us proceed, and glad my father's sight ;  
We shall at least be fairly lodged and fed,  
I can ensure a supper and a bed ;

Let us this night, as one of pleasure date,  
And of surprise : it is an act of fate.'

' Go on,' the 'squire in happy temper cried ;  
' I like such blunder ! I approve such guide.'

They ride, they halt, the farmer comes in haste,

Then tells his wife how much their house is graced ;

They bless the chance, they praise the lucky son,

That caused the error—Nay ! it was not one ;



But their good fortune—Cheerful grew the  
'squire,  
Who found dependants, flattery, wine, and  
fire;  
He heard the jack turn round; the busy dame  
Produced her damask; and with supper came  
The daughter, dress'd with care, and full of  
maiden-shame.

Surprised, our hero saw the air and dress,  
And strove his admiration to express;  
Nay! felt it too—for Harriot was, in truth,  
A tall fair beauty in the bloom of youth;  
And from the pleasure and surprise, a grace  
Adorn'd the blooming damsel's form and face;  
Then too, such high respect and duty paid  
By all—such silent reverence in the maid;  
Vent'ring with caution, yet with haste, a  
glance;

Loth to retire, yet trembling to advance,  
Appear'd the nymph, and in her gentle guest  
Stirr'd soft emotions till the hour of rest:  
Sweet was his sleep, and in the morn again  
He felt a mixture of delight and pain:

'How fair, how gentle,' said the 'squire, 'how  
meek,  
And yet how sprightly, when disposed to  
speak!

Nature has bless'd her form, and Heaven her  
mind,  
But in her favours Fortune is unkind;  
Poor is the maid—nay, poor she cannot prove  
Who is enrich'd with beauty, worth, and love.'

The 'squire arose, with no precise intent  
To go or stay—uncertain what he meant:  
He moved to part—they begg'd him first to  
dine;

And who could then escape from love and  
wine?

As came the night, more charming grew the  
fair,  
And seem'd to watch him with a two-fold  
care:

On the third morn, resolving not to stay,  
Though urged by love, he bravely rode away.

Arrived at home, three pensive days he gave  
To feelings fond and meditations grave;  
Lovely she was, and, if he did not err,  
As fond of him as his fond heart of her;  
Still he delay'd, unable to decide  
Which was the master-passion, love or pride:  
He sometimes wonder'd how his friend could  
make,

And then exulted in, the night's mistake;

Had she but fortune, 'doubtless then,' he cried,  
'Some happier man had won the wealthy  
bride.'

While thus he hung in balance, now inclined  
To change his state, and then to change his  
mind—

That careless George dropp'd idly on the  
ground

A letter, which his crafty master found;  
The stupid youth confess'd his fault, and  
pray'd

The generous 'squire to spare a gentle maid;  
Of whom her tender mother, full of fears,  
Had written much—'She caught her oft in  
tears,

For ever thinking on a youth above  
Her humble fortune—still she own'd not love;  
Nor can define, dear girl! the cherish'd pain,  
But would rejoice to see the cause again:  
That neighbouring youth, whom she endured  
before,

She now rejects, and will behold no more:  
Raised by her passion, she no longer stoops  
To her own equals, but she pines and droops,  
Like to a lily, on whose sweets the sun  
Has withering gazed—she saw and was un-  
done:

His wealth allured her not—nor was she moved  
By his superior state, himself she loved;  
So mild, so good, so gracious, so genteel—  
But spare your sister, and her love conceal;  
We must the fault forgive, since she the pain  
must feel.'

'Fault!' said the 'squire, 'there's coarse-  
ness in the mind

That thus conceives of feelings so refined;  
Here end my doubts, nor blame yourself, my  
friend,

Fate made you careless—here my doubts  
have end.'

The way is plain before us—there is now  
The lover's visit first, and then the vow  
Mutual and fond, the marriage-rite, the bride  
Brought to her home with all a husband's  
pride;

The 'squire receives the prize his merits won,  
And the glad parents leave the patron-son.

But in short time he saw with much sur-  
prise,

First gloom, then grief, and then resentment  
rise,

From proud, commanding frowns and anger-  
darting eyes:

'Is there in Harriot's humble mind this fire,  
This fierce impatience?' ask'd the puzzled  
'squire :

'Has marriage changed her? or the mask  
she wore

Has she thrown by, and is herself once more ?'

Hour after hour, when clouds on clouds  
appear,

Dark and more dark, we know the tempest  
near ;

And thus the frowning brow, the restless form,  
And threat'ning glance, forerun domestic  
storm :

So read the husband, and, with troubled mind,  
Reveal'd his fears—' My love, I hope you find  
All here is pleasant—but I must confess  
You seem offended, or in some distress ;  
Explain the grief you feel, and leave me to  
redress.'

'Leave it to you?' replied the nymph—  
'indeed !

What—to the cause from whence the ills  
proceed ?

Good Heaven! to take me from a place,  
where I

Had every comfort underneath the sky ;  
And then immure me in a gloomy place,  
With the grim monsters of your ugly race,  
That from their canvas staring, make me  
dread

Through the dark chambers where they hang  
to tread !

No friend nor neighbour comes to give that  
joy,

Which all things here must banish or destroy :  
Where is the promised coach? the pleasant  
ride ?

Oh! what a fortune has a farmer's bride !  
Your sordid pride has placed me just above  
Your hired domestics—and what pays me ?  
love !

A selfish fondness I endure each hour,  
And share unwitness'd pomp, unenvied power ;  
I hear your folly, smile at your parade,  
And see your favourite dishes duly made ;  
Then am I richly dress'd for you t' admire,  
Such is my duty and my lord's desire ;  
Is this a life for youth, for health, for joy ?  
Are these my duties—this my base employ ?  
No! to my father's house will I repair,  
And make your idle wealth support me there ;  
Was it your wish to have an humble bride  
For bondage thankful? Curse upon your pride!

Was it a slave you wanted? You shall see  
That if not happy, I at least am free ;  
Well, sir, your answer :—silent stood the  
'squire,

As looks a miser at his house on fire ;  
Where all he deems is vanish'd in that flame,  
Swept from the earth his substance and his  
name ;

So, lost to every promised joy of life,  
Our 'squire stood gaping at his angry wife ;—  
His fate, his ruin, where he saw it vain  
To hope for peace, pray, threaten, or com-  
plain ;

And thus, betwixt his wonder at the ill  
And his despair—there stood he gaping still.

'Your answer, sir—shall I depart a spot  
I thus detest?'—'Oh, miserable lot !'

Exclaim'd the man. 'Go, serpent! nor remain  
To sharpen wo by insult and disdain :

A nest of harpies was I doom'd to meet ;  
What plots, what combinations of deceit !  
I see it now—all plann'd, design'd, contrived ;  
Served by that villain—by this fury wiv'd—  
What fate is mine! What wisdom, virtue,  
truth,

Can stand, if dæmons set their traps for  
youth ?

He lose his way! vile dog! he cannot lose  
The way a villain through his life pursues ;  
And thou, deceiver! thou afraid to move,  
And hiding close the serpent in the dove!

I saw—but, fated to endure disgrace—  
Unheeding saw, the fury in thy face ;  
And call'd it spirit—Oh! I might have found  
Fraud and imposture—all the kindred round !  
A nest of vipers'—

—'Sir, I'll not admit  
These wild effusions of your angry wit :  
Have you that value, that we all should use  
Such mighty arts for such important views ?  
Are you such prize—and is my state so fair,  
That they should sell their souls to get me  
there ?

Think you that we alone our thoughts dis-  
guise ?

When in pursuit of some contended prize,  
Mask we alone the heart, and soothe whom  
we despise !

Speak you of craft and subtle schemes, who  
know

That all your wealth you to deception owe ;  
Who play'd for ten dull years a scoundrel-part,  
To worm yourself into a widow's heart ?

Now, when you guarded, with superior skill,  
That lady's closet, and preserved her will,  
Blind in your craft, you saw not one of those  
Opposed by you might you in turn oppose;  
Or watch your motions, and by art obtain  
Share of that wealth you gave your peace to  
gain?

Did conscience never '—

—'Cease, Tormentor, cease—

Or reach me poison—let me rest in peace!'

'Agreed—but hear me—let the truth  
appear;'

'Then state your purpose—I'll be calm and  
hear.'

'Know then, this wealth, sole object of your  
care,

I had some right, without your hand, to share;  
My mother's claim was just—but soon she saw  
Your power, compell'd, insulted, to withdraw:  
'Twas then my father, in his anger, swore  
You should divide the fortune, or restore;  
Long we debated—and you find me now  
Heroic victim to a father's vow;  
Like Jephtha's daughter, but in different  
state,

And both decreed to mourn our early fate;  
Hence was my brother servant to your pride,  
Vengeance made him your slave—and me  
your bride:

Now all is known—a dreadful price I pay  
For our revenge—but still we have our day;  
All that you love you must with others share,  
Or all you dread from their resentment dare!  
Yet terms I offer—let contention cease:  
Divide the spoil, and let us part in peace.'

Our hero trembling heard—he sat—he  
rose—

Nor could his motions nor his mind compose;  
He paced the room—and, stalking to her side,  
Gazed on the face of his undaunted bride;  
And nothing there but scorn and calm  
aversion spied.

He would have vengeance, yet he fear'd the  
law:

Her friends would threaten, and their power  
he saw;

'Then let her go:—but oh! a mighty sum  
Would that demand, since he had let her come;  
Nor from his sorrows could he find redress,  
Save that which led him to a like distress,  
And all his ease was in his wife to see  
A wretch as anxious and distress'd as he:  
Her strongest wish the fortune to divide  
And part in peace, his avarice denied;  
And thus it happen'd, as in all deceit,  
The cheater found the evil of the cheat;  
The husband grieved—nor was the wife at  
rest;

Him she could vex, and he could her molest;  
She could his passion into frenzy raise,  
But when the fire was kindled, fear'd the  
blaze:

As much they studied, so in time they found  
The easiest way to give the deepest wound;  
But then, like fencers, they were equal still,  
Both lost in danger what they gain'd in skill;  
Each heart a keener kind of rancour gain'd,  
And paining more, was more severely pain'd;  
And thus by both were equal vengeance dealt,  
And both the anguish they inflicted felt.

## TALE XIII. JESSE AND COLIN

Then she plots, then she ruminates, then  
she devises, and what they think in their hearts  
they may effect, they will break their hearts  
but they will effect.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act ii, Scene 2.

She has spoke what she should not, I am  
sure of that; Heaven knows what she hath  
known.

*Macbeth*, Act v, Scene 1.

Our house is hell, and thou a merry devil.

*Merchant of Venice*, Act ii, Scene 3.

And yet, for aught I see, as they are sick  
that surfeit with too much, as they that starve

with nothing; it is no mean happiness, there-  
fore, to be seated in the mean.

*Merchant of Venice*, Act i, Scene 2.

A VICAR died, and left his daughter poor—  
It hurt her not, she was not rich before:  
Her humble share of worldly goods she  
sold,  
Paid every debt, and then her fortune told;  
And found, with youth and beauty, hope and  
health,  
Two hundred guineas was her worldly wealth;

It then remain'd to choose her path in life,  
 And first, said Jesse, 'Shall I be a wife?—  
 Colin is mild and civil, kind and just,  
 I know his love, his temper I can trust;  
 But small his farm, it asks perpetual care,  
 And we must toil as well as trouble share:  
 True, he was taught in all the gentle arts  
 That raise the soul, and soften human hearts;  
 And boasts a parent, who deserves to shine  
 In higher class, and I could wish her mine;  
 Nor wants he will his station to improve,  
 A just ambition waked by faithful love;—  
 Still is he poor—and here my father's friend  
 Deigns for his daughter, as her own, to send;  
 A worthy lady, who it seems has known  
 A world of griefs and troubles of her own:  
 I was an infant, when she came, a guest  
 Beneath my father's humble roof to rest;  
 Her kindred all unfeeling, vast her woes,  
 Such her complaint, and there she found  
 repose;

Enrich'd by fortune, now she nobly lives,  
 And nobly, from the blest abundance, gives;  
 The grief, the want of human life, she knows,  
 And comfort there and here relief bestows;  
 But are they not dependants?—Foolish pride!  
 Am I not honour'd by such friend and guide?  
 Have I a home,' (here Jesse dropp'd a tear),  
 'Or friend beside?'—A faithful friend was  
 near.

Now Colin came, at length resolved to lay  
 His heart before her and to urge her stay;  
 True, his own plough the gentle Colin drove,  
 An humble farmer with aspiring love;  
 Who, urged by passion, never dared till now,  
 Thus urged by fears, his trembling hopes  
 avow:

Her father's glebe he managed; every year  
 The grateful vicar held the youth more dear;  
 He saw indeed the prize in Colin's view,  
 And wish'd his Jesse with a man so true;  
 Timid as true, he urged with anxious air  
 His tender hope, and made the trembling  
 prayer;

When Jesse saw, nor could with coldness see,  
 Such fond respect, such tried sincerity:  
 Grateful for favours to her father dealt,  
 She more than grateful for his passion felt;  
 Nor could she frown on one so good and kind,  
 Yet fear'd to smile, and was unfix'd in mind;  
 But prudence placed the female friend in  
 view—

What might not one so rich and grateful do?

So lately, too, the good old vicar died,  
 His faithful daughter must not cast aside  
 The signs of filial grief, and be a ready bride:  
 Thus, led by prudence, to the lady's seat  
 The village-beauty purposed to retreat;  
 But, as in hard-fought fields the victor knows  
 What to the vanquish'd he, in honour, owes,  
 So in this conquest over powerful love,  
 Prudence resolved a generous foe to prove;  
 And Jesse felt a mingled fear and pain  
 In her dismissal of a faithful swain,  
 Gave her kind thanks, and when she saw  
 his wo,  
 Kindly betray'd that she was loth to go;  
 'But would she promise, if abroad she met  
 A frowning world, she would remember yet  
 Where dwelt a friend?'—'That could she  
 not forget.'

And thus they parted; but each faithful heart  
 Felt the compulsion, and refused to part.

Now by the morning mail the timid maid  
 Was to that kind and wealthy dame convey'd;  
 Whose invitation, when her father died,  
 Jesse as comfort to her heart applied;  
 She knew the days her generous friend had  
 seen—

As wife and widow, evil days had been;  
 She married early, and for half her life  
 Was an insulted and forsaken wife;  
 Widow'd and poor, her angry father gave,  
 Mix'd with reproach, the pittance of a slave;  
 Forgetful brothers pass'd her, but she knew  
 Her humbler friends, and to their home  
 withdrew;

The good old vicar to her sire applied  
 For help, and help'd her when her sire denied;  
 When in few years death stalk'd through  
 bower and hall,

Sires, sons, and sons of sons, were buried all:  
 She then abounded, and had wealth to spare  
 For softening grief she once was doom'd to  
 share;

Thus train'd in misery's school, and taught  
 to feel,

She would rejoice an orphan's woes to heal:  
 So Jesse thought, who look'd within her  
 breast,  
 And thence conceived how bounteous minds  
 are bless'd.

From her vast mansion look'd the lady down  
 On humbler buildings of a busy town;  
 Thence came her friends of either sex, and all,  
 With whom she lived on terms reciprocal:

They pass'd the hours with their accustom'd ease,

As guests inclined, but not compelled to please;

But there were others in the mansion found,  
For office chosen, and by duties bound;  
Three female rivals, each of power possess'd,  
Th' attendant-maid, poor friend, and kindred-guest.

To these came Jesse, as a seaman thrown  
By the rude storm upon a coast unknown:  
The view was flattering, civil seem'd the race,  
But all unknown the dangers of the place.

Few hours had pass'd, when, from attendants freed,

The lady utter'd—'This is kind indeed;  
Believe me, love! that I for one like you  
Have daily pray'd, a friend discreet and true;  
Oh! wonder not that I on you depend,  
You are mine own hereditary friend:  
Hearken, my Jesse, never can I trust  
Beings ungrateful, selfish, and unjust;  
But you are present, and my load of care  
Your love will serve to lighten and to share:  
Come near me, Jesse—let not those below  
Of my reliance on your friendship know;  
Look as they look, be in their freedoms free—  
But all they say do you convey to me.'

Here Jesse's thoughts to Colin's cottage flew,  
And with such speed she scarce their absence knew.

'Jane loves her mistress, and should she depart,  
I lose her service, and she breaks her heart;  
My ways and wishes, looks and thoughts she knows,

And deuteous care by close attention shows:  
But is she faithful? in temptation strong?  
Will she not wrong me? ah! I fear the wrong:  
Your father loved me; now, in time of need,  
Watch for my good, and to his place succeed.

'Blood doesn't bind—that girl, who every day

Eats of my bread, would wish my life away;  
I am her *dear relation*, and she thinks  
To make her fortune, an ambitious minx!  
She only courts me for the prospect's sake,  
Because she knows I have a will to make;  
Yes, love! my will delay'd, I know not how—  
But you are here, and I will make it now.

'That idle creature, keep her in your view,  
See what she does, what she desires to do;

On her young mind may artful villains prey,  
And to my plate and jewels find a way;  
A pleasant humour has the girl: her smile  
And cheerful manner tedious hours beguile:  
But well observe her, ever near her be,  
Close in your thoughts, in your professions free.

'Again, my Jesse, hear what I advise,  
And watch a woman ever in disguise;  
Issop, that widow, serious, subtle, sly—  
But what of this?—I must have company:  
She markets for me, and although she makes  
Profit, no doubt, of all she undertakes,  
Yet she is one I can to all produce,  
And all her talents are in daily use;  
Deprived of her, I may another find  
As sly and selfish, with a weaker mind:  
But never trust her, she is full of art,  
And worms herself into the closest heart;  
Seem then, I pray you, careless in her sight,  
Nor let her know, my love, how we unite.

'Do, my good Jesse, cast a view around,  
And let no wrong within my house be found;  
That girl associates with—I know not who  
Are her companions, nor what ill they do;  
'Tis then the widow plans, 'tis then she tries  
Her various arts and schemes for fresh supplies;

'Tis then, if ever, Jane her duty quits,  
And, whom I know not, favours and admits:  
Oh! watch their movements all; for me 'tis hard,

Indeed is vain, but you may keep a guard;  
And I, when none your watchful glance deceive,  
May make my will, and think what I shall leave.'

Jesse, with fear, disgust, alarm, surprise,  
Heard of these duties for her ears and eyes;  
Heard by what service she must gain her bread,

And went with scorn and sorrow to her bed.

Jane was a servant fitted for her place,  
Experienced, cunning, fraudulent, selfish, base;  
Skill'd in those mean humiliating arts  
That make their way to proud and selfish hearts;

By instinct taught, she felt an awe, a fear,  
For Jesse's upright, simple character;  
Whom with gross flattery she awhile assail'd,  
And then beheld with hatred when it fail'd;  
Yet trying still upon her mind for hold,  
She all the secrets of the mansion told;

And to invite an equal trust, she drew  
Of every mind a bold and rapid view ;  
But on the widow'd friend with deep disdain,  
And rancorous envy, dwelt the treacherous

Jane :—

In vain such arts ; without deceit or pride,  
With a just taste and feeling for her guide,  
From all contagion Jesse kept apart,  
Free in her manners, guarded in her heart.

Jesse one morn was thoughtful, and her  
sigh

The widow heard as she was passing by ;  
And—' Well ! ' she said, ' is that some  
distant swain,

Or aught with us, that gives your bosom pain ?  
Come, we are fellow-sufferers, slaves in thrall,  
And tasks and griefs are common to us all ;  
Think not my frankness strange : they love  
to paint

Their state with freedom, who endure  
restraint ;

And there is something in that speaking eye  
And sober mien, that prove I may rely :  
You came a stranger ; to my words attend,  
Accept my offer, and you find a friend ;  
It is a labyrinth in which you stray,  
Come, hold my clue, and I will lead the way.

' Good Heav'n ! that one so jealous, envious,  
base,

Should be the mistress of so sweet a place ;  
She, who so long herself was low and poor,  
Now broods suspicious on her useless store ;  
She loves to see us abject, loves to deal

Her insult round, and then pretends to feel ;  
Prepare to cast all dignity aside,

For know your talents will be quickly tried ;  
Nor think, from favours past, a friend to gain,

'Tis but by duties we our posts maintain :  
I read her novels, gossip through the town,

And daily go, for idle stories, down ;  
I cheapen all she buys, and bear the curse

Of honest tradesmen for my niggard-purse ;  
And, when for her this meanness I display,

She cries, " I heed not what I throw away ; "  
Of secret bargains I endure the shame,

And stake my credit for our fish and game ;  
Oft has she smiled to hear " her generous soul

Would gladly give, but stoops to my control : "  
Nay ! I have heard her, when she chanced to  
come

Where I contended for a petty sum,  
Affirm 'twas painful to behold such care,

" But Issop's nature is to pinch and spare : "

Thus all the meanness of the house is mine,  
And my reward—to scorn her, and to dine.

' See next that giddy thing with neither pride  
To keep her safe, nor principle to guide :

Poor, idle, simple flirt ! as sure as fate  
Her maiden-fame will have an early date :

Of her beware ; for all who live below  
Have faults they wish not all the world to

know ;  
And she is fond of listening, full of doubt,  
And stoops to guilt to find an error out.

' And now once more observe the artful  
maid,

A lying, prying, jilting, thievish jade ;  
I think, my love, you would not condescend

To call a low, illiterate girl your friend :  
But in our troubles we are apt, you know,

To lean on all who show some compassion show ;  
And she has flexible features, acting eyes,

And seems with every look to sympathise ;  
No mirror can a mortal's grief express

With more precision, or can feel it less ;  
That proud, mean spirit, she by fawning

courts,  
By vulgar flattery, and by vile reports ;  
And by that proof she every instant gives

To one so mean, that yet a meaner lives.—  
' Come, I have drawn the curtain, and you

see  
Your fellow-actors, all our company ;  
Should you incline to throw reserve aside,

And in my judgment and my love confide,  
I could some prospects open to your view,

That ask attention—and, till then, adieu.'  
' Farewell ! ' said Jesse, hastening to her

room,  
Where all she saw within, without, was gloom :  
Confused, perplex'd, she pass'd a dreary hour,

Before her reason could exert its power ;  
To her all seem'd mysterious, all allied

To avarice, meanness, folly, craft, and pride ;  
Wearied with thought, she breathed the

garden's air,  
Then came the laughing lass, and join'd her

there.  
' My sweetest friend has dwelt with us a  
week,

And does she love us ? be sincere and speak ;  
My aunt you cannot—Lord ! how I should

hate  
To be like her, all misery and state ;  
Proud, and yet envious, she disgusted sees

All who are happy, and who look at ease.

Let friendship bind us, I will quickly show  
Some favourites near us, you'll be bless'd to  
know;

My aunt forbids it—but, can she expect  
To soothe her spleen, we shall ourselves  
neglect?

Jane and the widow were to watch and stay  
My free-born feet; I watch'd as well as they;  
Lo! what is this? this simple key explores  
The dark recess that holds the spinster's  
stores;

And led by her ill star, I chanced to see  
Where Issop keeps her stock of ratafie;  
Used in the hours of anger and alarm,  
It makes her civil, and it keeps her warm;  
Thus bless'd with secrets, both would choose  
to hide,

Their fears now grant me what their scorn  
denied.

'My freedom thus by their assent secured,  
Bad as it is, the place may be endured;  
And bad it is, but her estates, you know,  
And her beloved hoards, she must bestow;  
So we can slyly our amusements take,  
And friends of dæmons, if they help us, make.'

'Strange creatures these,' thought Jesse,  
half inclined

To smile at one malicious and yet kind;  
Frank and yet cunning, with a heart to  
love

And malice prompt—the serpent and the  
dove;

Here could she dwell? or could she yet  
depart?

Could she be artful? could she bear with  
art?—

This splendid mansion gave the cottage grace,  
She thought a dungeon was a happier place;  
And Colin pleading, when he pleaded best,  
Wrought not such sudden change in Jesse's  
breast.

The wondering maiden, who had only read  
Of such vile beings, saw them now with dread;  
Safe in themselves—for nature has design'd  
The creature's poison harmless to the kind;  
But all beside who in the haunts are found  
Must dread the poison, and must feel the  
wound.

Days full of care, slow weary weeks pass'd  
on,

Eager to go, still Jesse was not gone;  
Her time in trifling or in tears she spent,  
She never gave, she never felt content:

The lady wonder'd that her humble guest  
Strove not to please, would neither lie nor jest;  
She sought no news, no scandal would convey,  
But walk'd for health, and was at church to  
pray;

All this displeased, and soon the widow cried:  
'Let me be frank—I am not satisfied;  
You know my wishes, I your judgment trust;  
You can be useful, Jesse, and you must;  
Let me be plainer, child—I want an ear,  
When I am deaf, instead of mine to hear;  
When mine is sleeping, let your eye awake;  
When I observe not, observation take;  
Alas! I rest not on my pillow laid,  
Then threat'ning whispers make my soul  
afraid;

The tread of strangers to my ear ascends,  
Fed at my cost, the minions of my friends;  
While you, without a care, a wish to please,  
Eat the vile bread of idleness and ease.'

Th' indignant girl astonish'd answer'd—  
'Nay!

This instant, madam, let me haste away;  
Thus speaks my father's, thus an orphan's  
friend?

This instant, lady, let your bounty end.'

The lady frown'd indignant—'What!' she  
cried,

'A vicar's daughter with a princess' pride!  
And pauper's lot! but pitying I forgive;  
How, simple Jesse, do you think to live?  
Have I not power to help you, foolish maid?  
To my concerns be your attention paid;  
With cheerful mind th' allotted duties take,  
And recollect I have a will to make.'

Jesse, who felt as liberal natures feel,  
When thus the baser their designs reveal,  
Replied—'Those duties were to her unfit,  
Nor would her spirit to her tasks submit.'

In silent scorn the lady sate awhile,  
And then replied with stern contemptuous  
smile—

'Think you, fair madam, that you came  
to share

Fortunes like mine without a thought or care?  
A guest, indeed! from every trouble free,  
Dress'd by my help, with not a care for me;  
When I a visit to your father made,  
I for the poor assistance largely paid;  
To his domestics I their tasks assign'd,  
I fix'd the portion for his hungry hind;  
And had your father (simple man!) obey'd  
My good advice, and watch'd as well as pray'd,

He might have left you something with his prayers,

And lent some colour for these lofty airs.—  
'In tears! my love! Oh, then my soften'd heart

Cannot resist—we never more will part;  
I need your friendship—I will be your friend,  
And thus determined, to my will attend.'

Jesse went forth, but with determined soul  
To fly such love, to break from such control;  
'I hear enough,' the trembling damsel cried;  
'Flight be my care, and Providence my guide:  
Ere yet a prisoner, I escape will make;  
Will, thus display'd, th' insidious arts forsake,  
And, as the rattle sounds, will fly the fatal snake.'

Jesse her thanks upon the morrow paid,  
Prepared to go, determined though afraid.

'Ungrateful creature,' said the lady, 'this  
Could I imagine?—are you frantic, miss?  
What! leave your friend, your prospects—  
is it true?'

This Jesse answer'd by a mild 'Adieu!'

The dame replied, 'Then houseless may  
you rove,

The starving victim to a guilty love;  
Branded with shame, in sickness doom'd to  
nurse

An ill-form'd cub, your scandal and your  
curse;

Spurn'd by its scoundrel father, and ill fed  
By surly rustics with the parish-bread!—  
Relent you not?—speak—yet I can forgive;  
Still live with me'—'With you,' said Jesse,  
'live?'

'No! I would first endure what you describe,  
Rather than breathe with your detested tribe;  
Who long have feign'd, till now their very  
hearts

Are firmly fix'd in their accursed parts;  
Who all profess esteem, and feel disdain,  
And all, with justice, of deceit complain;  
Whom I could pity, but that, while I stay,  
My terror drives all kinder thoughts away;  
Grateful for this, that when I think of you,  
I little fear what poverty can do.'

The angry matron her attendant Jane  
Summon'd in haste to soothe the fierce dis-  
dain:

'A vile detested wretch!' the lady cried,  
'Yet shall she be, by many an effort, tried,  
And, clogg'd with debt and fear, against her  
will abide;

And once secured, she never shall depart  
Till I have proved the firmness of her heart;  
Then when she dares not, would not, cannot  
go,

I'll make her feel what 'tis to use me so.'

The pensive Colin in his garden stray'd,  
But felt not then the beauties it display'd;  
There many a pleasant object met his view,  
A rising wood of oaks behind it grew;  
A stream ran by it, and the village-green  
And public road were from the gardens seen;  
Save where the pine and larch the bound'ry  
made,

And on the rose-beds threw a softening shade.

The mother sat beside the garden-door,  
Dress'd as in times ere she and hers were poor;  
The broad-laced cap was known in ancient  
days,

When madam's dress compell'd the village  
praise;

And still she look'd as in the times of old,  
Ere his last farm the erring husband sold;  
While yet the mansion stood in decent state,  
And paupers waited at the well-known gate.

'Alas! my son!' the mother cried, 'and why  
That silent grief and oft-repeated sigh?  
True we are poor, but thou hast never felt  
Pangs to thy father for his error dealt;  
Pangs from strong hopes of visionary gain,  
For ever raised, and ever found in vain.

He rose unhappy! from his fruitless schemes,  
As guilty wretches from their blissful dreams;  
But thou wert then, my son, a playful child,  
Wondering at grief, gay, innocent, and wild;  
Listening at times to thy poor mother's sighs,  
With curious looks and innocent surprise;

Thy father dying, thou, my virtuous boy,  
My comfort always, waked my soul to joy;  
With the poor remnant of our fortune left,  
Thou hast our station of its gloom bereft:  
Thy lively temper, and thy cheerful air,  
Have cast a smile on sadness and despair;  
Thy active hand has dealt to this poor space  
The bliss of plenty and the charm of grace;  
And all around us wonder when they find  
Such taste and strength, such skill and power  
combined;

There is no mother, Colin, no not one,  
But envies me so kind, so good a son;  
By thee supported on this failing side,  
Weakness itself awakes a parent's pride:  
I bless the stroke that was my grief before,  
And feel such joy that 'tis disease no more;



Shielded by thee, my want becomes my wealth—

And soothed by Colin, sickness smiles at health;

The old men love thee, they repeat thy praise,  
And say, like thee were youth in earlier days;  
While every village-maiden cries, "How gay,  
How smart, how brave, how good is Colin Grey!"

'Yet art thou sad; alas! my son, I know  
Thy heart is wounded, and the cure is slow;  
Fain would I think that Jesse still may come  
To share the comforts of our rustic home:  
She surely loved thee; I have seen the maid,  
When thou hast kindly brought the vicar  
aid—

When thou hast eased his bosom of its pain,  
Oh! I have seen her—she will come again.'

The matron ceased; and Colin stood the while

Silent, but striving for a grateful smile;  
He then replied—'Ah! sure, had Jesse stay'd,  
And shared the comforts of our sylvan shade,  
The tenderest duty and the fondest love  
Would not have fail'd that generous heart to  
move;

A grateful pity would have ruled her breast,  
And my distresses would have made me blest.

'But she is gone, and ever has in view  
Grandeur and taste—and what will then  
ensue?

Surprise and then delight in scenes so fair and  
new;

For many a day, perhaps for many a week,  
Home will have charms, and to her bosom  
speak;

But thoughtless ease, and affluence, and pride,  
Seen day by day, will draw her heart aside:  
And she at length, though gentle and sincere,  
Will think no more of our enjoyments here.'

Sighing he spake—but hark! he hears  
th' approach

Of rattling wheels! and lo! the evening-  
coach;

Once more the movement of the horses' feet  
Makes the fond heart with strong emotion  
beat;

Faint were his hopes, but ever had the sight  
Drawn him to gaze beside his gate at night;  
And when with rapid wheels it hurried by,  
He grieved his parent with a hopeless sigh;  
And could the blessing have been bought—  
what sum

Had he not offer'd, to have Jesse come!  
She came—he saw her bending from the door,  
Her face, her smile, and he beheld no more;  
Lost in his joy—the mother lent her aid  
T' assist and to detain the willing maid;  
Who thought her late, her present home to  
make,

Sure of a welcome for the vicar's sake:  
But the good parent was so pleased, so kind,  
So pressing Colin, she so much inclined,  
That night advanced; and then so long  
detain'd,  
No wishes to depart she felt, or feign'd;  
Yet long in doubt she stood, and then per-  
force remain'd.

Here was a lover fond, a friend sincere;  
Here was content and joy, for she was here:  
In the mild evening, in the scene around,  
The maid, now free, peculiar beauties found;  
Blended with village-tones, the evening-gale  
Gave the sweet night-bird's warblings to the  
vale;

The youth embolden'd, yet abash'd, now  
told

His fondest wish, nor found the maiden  
cold;

The mother smiling whisper'd—'Let him go  
And seek the licence!' Jesse answer'd, 'No!'  
But Colin went. I know not if they live  
With all the comforts wealth and plenty  
give;

But with pure joy to envious souls denied,  
To suppliant meanness and suspicious pride;  
And village-maids of happy couples say,  
'They live like Jesse Bourne and Colin Grey.'

## TALE XIV. THE STRUGGLES OF CONSCIENCE

I am a villain ; yet I lie, I am not ;  
Fool ! of thyself speak well :—Fool ! do not  
flatter.

My Conscience hath a thousand several  
tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale.

*Richard III, Act v, Scene 3.*

My Conscience is but a kind of hard Conscience. . . . The fiend gives the more friendly counsel.

*Merchant of Venice, Act ii, Scene 2.*

Thou hast it now . . . and I fear  
Thou play'st most foully for't.

*Macbeth, Act iii, Scene 1.*

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Rase out the written troubles of the brain,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous  
stuff

Which weighs upon the heart ?

*Macbeth, Act v, Scene 3.*

. . . Soft ! I did but dream—

Oh ! coward Conscience, how dost thou afflict  
me !

*Richard III, Act v, Scene 3.*

A SERIOUS toymen in the city dwelt,  
Who much concern for his religion felt ;  
Reading, he changed his tenets, read again,  
And various questions could with skill maintain ;

Papist and quaker if we set aside,  
He had the road of every traveller tried ;  
There walk'd awhile, and on a sudden turn'd  
Into some by-way he had just discern'd :  
He had a nephew, Fulham—Fulham went  
His uncle's way, with every turn content ;  
He saw his pious kinsman's watchful care,  
And thought, such anxious pains his own  
might spare,

And he, the truth obtain'd, without the toil,  
might share.

In fact, young Fulham, though he little read,  
Perceived his uncle was by fancy led ;  
And smiled to see the constant care he took,  
Collating creed with creed, and book with book.

At length the senior fix'd ; I pass the sect  
He call'd a church, 'twas precious and elect ;  
Yet the seed fell not in the richest soil,  
For few disciples paid the preacher's toil ;

All in an attic-room were wont to meet,  
These few disciples at their pastor's feet  
With these went Fulham, who, discreet and  
grave,

Follow'd the light his worthy uncle gave ;  
Till a warm preacher found a way t' impart  
Awakening feelings to his torpid heart :  
Some weighty truths, and of unpleasant kind,  
Sank, though resisted, in his struggling mind ;  
He wish'd to fly them, but compell'd to stay,  
Truth to the waking Conscience found her  
way ;

For though the youth was call'd a prudent lad,  
And prudent was, yet serious faults he had ;  
Who now reflected—' Much am I surprised,  
I find these notions cannot be despised ;  
No ! there is something I perceive at last,  
Although my uncle cannot hold it fast ;  
Though I the strictness of these men reject,  
Yet I determine to be circumspect :  
This man alarms me, and I must begin  
To look more closely to the things within ;  
These sons of zeal have I derided long,  
But now begin to think the laughers wrong ;  
Nay, my good uncle, by all teachers moved,  
Will be prefer'd to him who none approved ;  
Better to love amiss than nothing to have  
loved.'

Such were his thoughts, when Conscience  
first began  
To hold close converse with th' awaken'd  
man :

He from that time reserved and cautious  
grew,  
And for his duties felt obedience due ;  
Pious he was not, but he fear'd the pain  
Of sins committed, nor would sin again.  
Whene'er he stray'd, he found his Conscience  
rose,

Like one determined what was ill t' oppose,  
What wrong t' accuse, what secret to disclose :  
To drag forth every latent act to light,  
And fix them fully in the actor's sight :  
This gave him trouble, but he still confess'd  
The labour useful, for it brought him rest.

The uncle died, and when the nephew read  
The will, and saw the substance of the dead—  
Five hundred guineas, with a stock in trade—  
He much rejoiced, and thought his fortune  
made ;

Yet felt aspiring pleasure at the sight,  
And for increase, ncreasing appetite :  
Desire of profit, idle habits check'd,  
(For Fulham's virtue was to be correct);  
He and his Conscience had their compact  
made—

'Urge me with truth, and you will soon  
persuade ;

But not,' he cried, ' for mere ideal things  
Give me to feel those terror-breeding stings.'

'Let not such thoughts,' she said, ' your  
mind confound ;

Trifles may wake me, but they never wound ;  
In them indeed there is a wrong and right,  
But you will find me pliant and polite ;  
Not like a Conscience of the dotard kind,  
Awake to dreams, to dire offences blind :

Let all within be pure, in all beside  
Be your own master, governor, and guide ;  
Alive to danger, in temptation strong,  
And I shall sleep our whole existence long.'

Sweet be thy sleep,' said Fulham ; ' strong  
must be

The tempting ill that gains access to me :  
Never will I to evil deed consent,  
Or, if surprised, oh ! how will I repent !  
Should gain be doubtful, soon would I re-  
store

The dangerous good, or give it to the poor ;  
Repose for them my growing wealth shall  
buy—

Or build—who knows ?—an hospital like  
Guy ?—

Yet why such means to soothe the smart  
within,

While firmly purposed to renounce the sin ?'

Thus our young Trader and his Conscience  
dwelt

In mutual love, and great the joy they felt ;  
But yet in small concerns, in trivial things,  
'She was,' he said, ' too ready with the stings ;'  
And he too apt, in search of growing gains,  
To lose the fear of penalties and pains :  
Yet these were trifling bickerings, petty jars,  
Domestic strifes, preliminary wars ;  
He ventured little, little she express'd  
Of indignation, and they both had rest.

Thus was he fix'd to walk the worthy way,  
When profit urged him to a bold essay :—  
A time was that when all at pleasure gam'd  
In lottery-chances, yet of law unblamed ;  
This Fulham tried, who would to him advance  
A pound or crown, he gave in turn a chance

For weighty prize—and should they nothing  
share,  
They had their crown or pound in Fulham's  
ware ;

Thus the old stores within the shop were sold  
For that which none refuses, new or old.

Was this unjust ? yet Conscience could not  
rest,

But made a mighty struggle in the breast ;  
And gave th' aspiring man an early proof,  
That should they war he would have work  
enough :

'Suppose,' said she, ' your vended numbers  
rise

The same with those which gain each real  
prize,

(Such your proposal,) can you ruin shun ?'  
'A hundred thousand,' he replied, ' to one.'

'Still it may happen : ' ' I the sum must pay.'

'You know you cannot : ' ' I can run away.'

'That is dishonest : '—' Nay, but you must  
wink

At a chance-hit ; it cannot be, I think :

Upon my conduct as a whole decide,

Such trifling errors let my virtues hide ;

Fail I at meeting ? am I sleepy there ?

My purse refuse I with the priest to share ?

Do I deny the poor a helping hand ?

Or stop the wicked women in the Strand ?

Or drink at club beyond a certain pitch ?

Which are your charges ? Conscience, tell  
me which ?'

'Tis well,' said she, ' but—' ' Nay, I pray,  
have done :

Trust me, I will not into danger run.'

The lottery drawn, not one demand was  
made ;

Fulham gain'd profit and increase of trade.

'See now,' said he—for Conscience yet  
arose—

'How foolish 'tis such measures to oppose :  
Have I not blameless thus my state ad-  
vanced ?'

'Still,' mutter'd Conscience, ' still it might  
have chanced.'

'Might ! ' said our hero, ' who is so exact  
As to inquire what might have been a fact ?'

Now Fulham's shop contain'd a curious  
view

Of costly trifles elegant and new :

The papers told where kind mammas might  
buy

The gayest toys to charm an infant's eye ;

Where generous beaux might gentle damsels  
please,

And travellers call who cross the land or seas,  
And find the curious art, the neat device  
Of precious value and of trifling price.

Here Conscience rested, she was pleased to  
find

No less an active than an honest mind ;  
But when he named his price, and when he  
swore,

His Conscience check'd him, that he ask'd no  
more,

When half he sought had been a large increase  
On fair demand, she could not rest in peace :  
(Beside th' affront to call th' adviser in,  
Who would prevent, to justify the sin ?)

She therefore told him, that ' he vainly tried  
To soothe her anger, conscious that he lied ;  
If thus he grasp'd at such usurious gains,  
He must deserve, and should expect her pains.'

The charge was strong ; he would in part  
confess

Offence there was—But, who offended less ?  
' What ! is a mere assertion call'd a lie ?

And if it be, are men compell'd to buy ?  
'Twas strange that Conscience on such points  
should dwell,

While he was acting (he would call it) well ;  
He bought as others buy, he sold as others sell :  
There was no fraud, and he demanded cause  
Why he was troubled, when he kept the  
laws ?'

' My laws ?' said Conscience : ' What,'  
said he, ' are thine ?

Oral or written, human or divine ?  
Show me the chapter, let me see the text ;  
By laws uncertain subjects are perplex'd :  
Let me my finger on the statute lay,  
And I shall feel it duty to obey.'

' Reflect,' said Conscience, ' 'twas your own  
desire

That I should warn you—does the compact  
tire ?

Repent you this ? then bid me not advise,  
And rather hear your passions as they rise ;  
So you may counsel and remonstrance shun,  
But then remember it is war begun ;  
And you may judge from some attacks, my  
friend,

What serious conflicts will on war attend.'

' Nay, but,' at length the thoughtful man  
replied,

' I say not that ; I wish you for my guide ;

Wish for your checks and your reproofs—but  
then

Be like a Conscience of my fellow-men ;  
Worthy I mean, and men of good report,  
And not the wretches who with Conscience  
sport :

There 's Bice, my friend, who passes off his  
grease

Of pigs for bears', in pots a crown apiece ;  
His Conscience never checks him when he  
swears

The fat he sells is honest fat of bears ;  
And so it is, for he contrives to give  
A drachm to each—'tis thus that tradesmen  
live :

Now why should you and I be over-nice ;  
What man is held in more repute than Bice ?'

Here ended the dispute ; but yet 'twas plain  
The parties both expected strife again :

Their friendship cool'd, he look'd about and  
saw

Numbers who seem'd unshackled by his awe ;  
While like a school-boy he was threaten'd still,  
Now for the deed, now only for the will ;  
Here Conscience answer'd, ' To thy neigh-  
bour's guide

Thy neighbour leave, and in thine own  
confide.'

Such were each day the charges and replies,  
When a new object caught the trader's eyes ;  
A vestry-patriot, could he gain the name,  
Would famous make him, and would pay the  
fame :

He knew full well the sums bequeath'd in  
charge

For schools, for alms-men, for the poor, were  
large ;

Report had told, and he could feel it true,  
That most unfairly dealt the trusted few ;  
No partners would they in their office take,  
Nor clear accounts at annual meetings make ;  
Aloud our hero in the vestry spoke  
Of hidden deeds, and vow'd to draw the cloak ;  
It was the poor man's cause, and he for one  
Was quite determined to see justice done :  
His foes affected laughter, then disdain,  
They too were loud and threat'ning, but in  
vain ;

The pauper's friend, their foe, arose and  
spoke again :

Fiercely he cried, ' Your garbled statements  
show

That you determine we shall nothing know ;

But we shall bring your hidden crimes to light,

Give you to shame, and to the poor their right.'

Virtue like this might some approval ask—  
But Conscience sternly said, 'You wear a mask!'

'At least,' said Fulham, 'if I have a view  
To serve myself, I serve the public too.'

Fulham, though check'd, retain'd his former zeal,

And this the cautious rogues began to feel :  
'Thus will he ever bark,' in peevish tone,

An elder cried—'the cur must have a bone :'  
They then began to hint, and to begin

Was all they needed—it was felt within ;  
In terms less veil'd an offer then was made,

Though distant still, it fail'd not to persuade :  
More plainly then was every point proposed,

Approved, accepted, and the bargain closed.  
'Th' exulting paupers hail'd their friend's

success,  
And bade adieu to murmurs and distress.'

Alas ! their friend had now superior light,  
And, view'd by that, he found that all was

right ;  
'There were no errors, the disbursements

small ;  
This was the truth, and truth was due to all.'

And rested Conscience ? No ! she would  
not rest,

Yet was content with making a protest :  
Some acts she now with less resistance bore,

Nor took alarm so quickly as before :  
Like those in towns besieged, who every ball

At first with terror view, and dread them all,  
But, grown familiar with the scenes, they fear

The danger less, as it approaches near ;  
So Conscience, more familiar with the view

Of growing evils, less attentive grew :  
Yet he who felt some pain, and dreaded more,

Gave a peace-offering to the angry poor.

Thus had he quiet—but the time was brief ;  
From his new triumph sprang a cause of grief ;

In office join'd, and acting with the rest,  
He must admit the sacramental test :

Now, as a sectary, who had all his life,  
As he supposed, been with the church at strife,

(No rules of hers, no laws had he perused,  
Nor knew the tenets he by rote abused) ;

Yet Conscience here arose more fierce and  
strong

Than when she told of robbery and wrong ;

'Change his religion ! No ! he must be sure  
That was a blow no Conscience could endure.'

Though friend to virtue, yet she oft abides  
In early notions, fix'd by erring guides ;

And is more startled by a call from those,  
Than when the foulest crimes her rest oppose ;

By error taught, by prejudice misled,  
She yields her rights, and fancy rules instead ;

When Conscience all her stings and terror  
deals,

Not as truth dictates, but as fancy feels :  
And thus within our hero's troubled breast,

Crime was less torture than the odious test.  
New forms, new measures, he must now

embrace,  
With sad conviction that they warr'd with

grace ;  
To his new church no former friend would

come,  
They scarce prefer'd her to the church of

Rome :  
But thinking much, and weighing guilt and

gain,  
Conscience and he commuted for her pain ;

Then promised Fulham to retain his creed,  
And their peculiar paupers still to feed ;

Their attic-room (in secret) to attend,  
And not forget he was the preacher's friend ;

Thus he proposed, and Conscience, troubled,  
tried,

And wanting peace, reluctantly complied.  
Now care subdued, and apprehensions gone,

In peace our hero went aspiring on ;  
But short the period—soon a quarrel rose,

Fierce in the birth, and fatal in the close ;  
With times of truce between, which rather

proved  
That both were weary, than that either loved.

Fulham ev'n now disliked the heavy thrall,  
And for her death would in his anguish call,

As Rome's mistaken friend exclaim'd, *Let  
Carthage fall !*

So felt our hero, so his wish express'd,  
Against this powerful sprite—*delenda est* :

Rome in her conquest saw not danger near,  
Freed from her rival, and without a fear ;

So, Conscience conquer'd, men perceive how  
free,

But not how fatal such a state must be.  
Fatal not free our hero's ; foe or friend,

Conscience on him was destined to attend :  
She dosed indeed, grew dull, nor seem'd to spy

Crime following crime, and each of deeper dye ;

But all were noticed, and the reckoning time  
With her account came on—crime following  
crime.

This, once a foe, now brother in the trust,  
Whom Fulham late described as fair and just,  
Was the sole guardian of a wealthy maid,  
Placed in his power, and of his frown afraid :  
Not quite an idiot, for her busy brain  
Sought, by poor cunning, trifling points to  
gain ;

Success in childish projects her delight,  
She took no heed of each important right.

The friendly parties met—the guardian  
cried,

'I am too old ; my sons have each a bride :  
Martha, my ward, would make an easy wife ;  
On easy terms I'll make her yours for life ;  
And then the creature is so weak and mild,  
She may be soothed and threaten'd as a  
child ;'—

'Yet not obey,' said Fulham, 'for your fools,  
Female and male, are obstinate as mules.'

Some points adjusted, these new friends  
agreed,

Proposed the day, and hurried on the deed.

'Tis a vile act,' said Conscience :—'It will  
prove,'

Replied the bolder man, 'an act of love ;  
Her wicked guardian might the girl have  
sold

To endless misery for a tyrant's gold ;  
Now may her life be happy—for I mean  
To keep my temper even and serene.'

'I cannot thus compound,' the spirit cried,  
'Nor have my laws thus broken and defied :  
This is a fraud, a bargain for a wife ;  
Expect my vengeance, or amend your life.'

The wifewas pretty, trifling, childish, weak ;  
She could not think, but would not cease to  
speak :

This he forbid—she took the caution ill,  
And boldly rose against his sovereign will ;  
With idiot-cunning she would watch the hour,  
When friends were present, to dispute his  
power :

With tyrant-craft, he then was still and calm,  
But raised in private terror and alarm :  
By many trials, she perceived how far  
To vex and tease, without an open war ;  
And he discover'd that so weak a mind  
No art could lead, and no compulsion bind ;  
The rudest force would fail such mind to tame,  
And she was callous to rebuke and shame ;

Proud of her wealth, the power of law she  
knew,

And would assist him in the spending too :  
His threaten'ing words with insult she defied,  
To all his reasoning with a stare replied ;  
And when he begg'd her to attend, would  
say,

'Attend I will—but let me have my way.'

Nor rest had Conscience : 'While you  
merit pain

From me,' she cried, 'you seek redress in  
vain.'

His thoughts were grievous : 'All that I  
possess

From this vile bargain adds to my distress ;  
To pass a life with one who will not mend,  
Who cannot love, nor save, nor wisely spend,  
Is a vile prospect, and I see no end ;

For if we part, I must of course restore  
Much of her money, and must wed no more.

'Is there no way ?'—here Conscience rose  
in power,

'Oh ! fly the danger of this fatal hour ;  
I am thy Conscience faithful, fond, and true,  
Ah, fly this thought, or evil must ensue ;  
Fall on thy knees, and pray with all thy soul,  
Thy purpose banish, thy design control ;  
Let every hope of such advantage cease,  
Or never more expect a moment's peace.'

Th' affrighten'd man a due attention paid,  
Felt the rebuke, and the command obey'd.

Again the wife rebell'd, again express'd  
A love for pleasure—a contempt of rest ;

'She, whom she pleased, would visit, would  
receive

Those who pleased her, nor deign to ask for  
leave.'

'One way there is,' said he ; 'I might  
contrive

Into a trap this foolish thing to drive :  
Who pleased her, said she ?—I'll be certain  
who—'

'Take heed,' said Conscience, 'what thou  
mean'st to do :

Ensnare thy wife ?'—'Why yes,' he must  
confess,

'It might be wrong—but there was no re-  
dress ;

Beside, to think,' said he, 'is not to sin.'

'Mistaken man !' replied the power within.  
No guest unnoticed to the lady came,

He judg'd th' event with mingled joy and  
shame ;

Of he withdrew, and seem'd to leave her free,  
But still as watchful as a lynx was he ;  
Meanwhile the wife was thoughtless, cool, and  
gay,

And, without virtue, had no wish to stray.

Though thus opposed, his plans were not  
resign'd ;

' Revenge,' said he, ' will prompt that daring  
mind ;

Refused supplies, insulted and distress'd,  
Enraged with me, and near a favourite  
guest—

Then will her vengeance prompt the daring  
deed,

And I shall watch, detect her, and be freed.'

There was a youth—but let me hide the  
name,

With all the progress of this deed of shame ;  
He had his views—on him the husband cast  
His net, and saw him in his trammels fast.

' Pause but a moment—think what you  
intend,'

Said the roused sleeper : ' I am yet a friend :  
Must all our days in enmity be spent ? '

' No ! ' and he paused—' Surely shall repent : '  
Then hurried on—the evil plan was laid,  
The wife was guilty, and her friend betray'd,  
And Fulham gain'd his wish, and for his will  
was paid.

Had crimes less weighty on the spirit press'd,  
This troubled Conscience might have sunk to  
rest ;

And, like a foolish guard, been bribed to peace,  
By a false promise, that offence should cease ;  
Past faults had seem'd familiar to the view,  
Confused if many, and obscure though true ;  
And Conscience, troubled with the dull  
account,

Had dropp'd her tale, and slumber'd o'er  
th' amount :

But, struck by daring guilt, alert she rose,  
Disturb'd, alarm'd, and could no more repose ;  
All hopes of friendship, and of peace, were  
past,

And every view with gloom was overcast.  
Hence from that day, that day of shame and  
sin,

Arose the restless enmity within ;  
On no resource could Fulham now rely,  
Doom'd all expedients, and in vain, to try ;  
For Conscience, roused, sat boldly on her  
throne,

Watch'd every thought, attack'd the foe alone,

And with envenom'd sting drew forth the  
inward groan :

Expedients fail'd that brought relief before,  
In vain his alms gave comfort to the poor,  
Give what he would, to him the comfort came  
no more :

Not prayer avail'd, and when (his crimes  
confess'd)

He felt some ease—she said—' are they  
redress'd ?

You still retain the profit, and be sure,  
Long as it lasts, this anguish shall endure.'

Fulham still tried to soothe her, cheat,  
mislead ;

But Conscience laid her finger on the deed,  
And read the crime with power, and all that  
must succeed :

He tried t' expel her, but was sure to find  
Her strength increased by all that he design'd ;  
Nor ever was his groan more loud and deep,  
Than when refresh'd she rose from momentary  
sleep.

Now desperate grown, weak, harass'd, and  
afraid,

From new allies he sought for doubtful aid ;  
To thought itself he strove to bid adieu,  
And from devotions to diversions flew ;  
He took a poor domestic for a slave,  
(Though Avarice grieved to see the price he  
gave) ;

Upon his board, once frugal, press'd a load  
Of viands rich, the appetite to goad ;

The long-protracted meal, the sparkling cup,  
Fought with his gloom, and kept his courage  
up :

Soon as the morning came, there met his eyes  
Accounts of wealth, that he might reading rise ;  
To profit then he gave some active hours,  
Till food and wine again should renovate his  
powers :

Yet, spite of all defence, of every aid,  
The watchful foe her close attention paid ;  
In every thoughtful moment, on she press'd,  
And gave at once her dagger to his breast ;  
He waked at midnight, and the fears of sin,  
As waters, through a bursten dam, broke in ;  
Nay, in the banquet, with his friends around,  
When all their cares and half their crimes  
were drown'd,

Would some chance act awake the slumbering  
fear,

And care and crime in all their strength  
appear :

The news is read, a guilty victim swings,  
And troubled looks proclaim the bosom-  
stings ;  
Some pair are wed ; this brings the wife in  
view ;  
And some divorced ; this shows the parting  
too ;  
Nor can he hear of evil word or deed,  
But they to thought, and thought to suffer-  
ings lead.  
Such was his life—no other changes came,  
The hurrying day, the conscious night the  
same ;  
The night of horror—when he starting cried,  
To the poor startled sinner at his side ;

' Is it in law ? am I condemn'd to die ?  
Let me escape !—I'll give—oh ! let me fly—  
How ! but a dream—no judges ! dungeon !  
chain !  
Or these grim men !—I will not sleep again.—  
Wilt thou, dread being ! thus thy promise  
keep ?  
Day is thy time—and wilt thou murder sleep ?  
Sorrow and want repose, and wilt thou come,  
Nor give one hour of pure untroubled gloom ?  
' Oh ! Conscience ! Conscience ! man's most  
faithful friend,  
Him canst thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend ;  
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,  
Thou art, oh ! woe for me, his deadliest foe !'

## TALE XV. ADVICE ; OR, THE 'SQUIRE AND THE PRIEST

His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets,  
sports—

And never noted in him any study,  
Any retirement, any sequestration.

*Henry V, Act i, Scene 1.*

I will converse with iron-witted fools,  
And unrespectful boys ; none are for me,  
That look into me with considerate eyes.

*Richard III, Act iv, Scene 2.*

You cram these words into mine ears,  
against

The stomach of my sense.

*Tempest, Act ii, Scene 1.*

A WEALTHY lord of far-extended land  
Had all that pleased him placed at his com-  
mand ;

Widow'd of late, but finding much relief  
In the world's comforts, he dismiss'd his grief ;  
He was by marriage of his daughters eased,  
And knew his sons could marry if they  
pleased ;

Meantime in travel he indulged the boys,  
And kept no spy nor partner of his joys.

These joys, indeed, were of the grosser kind,  
That fed the cravings of an earthly mind ;  
A mind, that, conscious of its own excess,  
Felt the reproach his neighbours would  
express.

Long at th' indulgent board he loved to sit,  
Where joy was laughter, and profaneness wit ;

And such the guest and manners of the hall,  
No wedded lady on the 'squire would call : .  
Here reign'd a favourite, and her triumph  
gain'd

O'er other favourites who before had reign'd ;  
Reserved and modest seem'd the nymph to  
be,

Knowing her lord was charm'd with modesty ;  
For he, a sportsman keen, the more enjoy'd,  
The greater value had the thing destroy'd.

Our 'squire declared, that, from a wife  
released,

He would no more give trouble to a priest ;  
Seem'd it not, then, ungrateful and unkind,  
That he should trouble from the priesthood  
find ?

The church he honour'd, and he gave the due  
And full respect to every son he knew ;  
But envied those who had the luck to meet  
A gentle pastor, civil, and discreet ;  
Who never bold and hostile sermon penn'd,  
To wound a sinner, or to shame a friend ;  
One whom no being either shunn'd or fear'd,  
Such must be loved wherever they appear'd.

Not such the stern old rector of the time,  
Who soothed no culprit, and who spared no  
crime ;

Who would his fears and his contempt express,  
For irreligion and licentiousness ;  
Of him our village lord, his guests among,  
By speech vindictive proved his feelings stung.



'Were he a bigot,' said the 'squire, 'whose zeal

Condemn'd us all, I should disdain to feel :  
But when a man of parts, in college train'd,  
Prates of our conduct—who would not be  
pain'd ?

While he declaims (where no one dares reply)  
On men abandon'd, grov'ling in the sty  
(Like beasts in human shape) of shameless  
luxury.

Yet with a patriot's zeal I stand the shock  
Of vile rebuke, example to his flock :  
But let this rector, thus severe and proud,  
Change his wide surplice for a narrow shroud,  
And I will place within his seat a youth,  
Train'd by the Graces, to explain the truth ;  
Then shall the flock with gentle hand be led,  
By wisdom won, and by compassion fed.'

This purposed teacher was a sister's son,  
Who of her children gave the priesthood one ;  
And she had early train'd for this employ  
The pliant talents of her college-boy :  
At various times her letters painted all  
Her brother's views—the manners of the hall ;  
The rector's harshness, and the mischief made  
By chiding those whom preachers should  
persuade :

This led the youth to views of easy life,  
A friendly patron, an obliging wife ;  
His tithe, his glebe, the garden and the steed,  
With books as many as he wish'd to read.

All this accorded with the uncle's will ;  
He loved a priest compliant, easy, still ;  
Sums he had often to his favourite sent,  
'To be,' he wrote, 'in manly freedom spent ;  
For well it pleased his spirit to assist  
An honest lad, who scorn'd a Methodist :'  
His mother too, in her maternal care,  
Bade him of canting hypocrites beware ;  
Who from his duties would his heart seduce,  
And make his talents of no earthly use.

Soon must a trial of his worth be made—  
The ancient priest is to the tomb convey'd ;  
And the youth summon'd from a serious  
friend,

His guide and host, new duties to attend.

Three months before, the nephew and the  
'squire

Saw mutual worth to praise and to admire ;  
And though the one too early left his wine,  
The other still exclaim'd—'My boy will shine :  
Yes, I perceive that he will soon improve,  
And I shall form the very guide I love ;

Decent abroad, he will my name defend,  
And, when at home, be social and unbend.'

The plan was specious, for the mind of  
James

Accorded duly with his uncle's schemes :  
He then aspired not to a higher name  
Than sober clerks of moderate talents claim ;  
Gravely to pray, and rev'rendly to preach,  
Was all he saw, good youth ! within his reach :  
Thus may a mass of sulphur long abide,  
Cold and inert, but, to the flame applied,  
Kindling it blazes, and consuming turns  
To smoke and poison, as it boils and burns.

James, leaving college, to a preacher stray'd ;  
What call'd, he knew not—but the call obey'd :  
Mild, idle, pensive, ever led by those  
Who could some specious novelty propose ;  
Humbly he listen'd, while the preacher dwelt  
On touching themes, and strong emotions felt ;  
And in this night was fix'd that plant will  
To one sole point, and he retains it still.

At first his care was to himself confined ;  
Himself assured, he gave it to mankind :  
His zeal grew active—honest, earnest zeal,  
And comfort dealt to him, he long'd to deal ;  
He to his favourite preacher now withdrew,  
Was taught to teach, instructed to subdue ;  
And train'd for ghostly warfare, when the call  
Of his new duties reach'd him from the hall.

Now to the 'squire, although alert and stout,  
Came unexpected an attack of gout ;  
And the grieved patron felt such serious pain,  
He never thought to see a church again :  
Thrice had the youthful rector taught the  
crowd,

Whose growing numbers spoke his powers  
aloud,  
Before the patron could himself rejoice  
(His pain still lingering) in the general voice ;  
For he imputed all this early fame  
To graceful manner, and the well-known  
name ;

And to himself assumed a share of praise,  
For worth and talents he was pleased to raise.

A month had flown, and with it fled disease ;  
What pleased before, began again to please ;  
Emerging daily from his chamber's gloom,  
He found his old sensations hurrying home ;  
Then call'd his nephew, and exclaim'd, 'My  
boy,

Let us again the balm of life enjoy ;  
The foe has left me, and I deem it right,  
Should he return, to arm me for the fight.'

Thus spoke the 'squire, the favourite nymph  
stood by,

And view'd the priest with insult in her eye :  
She thrice had heard him when he boldly  
spoke

On dangerous points, and fear'd he would  
revoke :

For James she loved not—and her manner  
told,

' This warm affection will be quickly cold :'  
And still she fear'd impression might be made  
Upon a subject, nervous and decay'd ;  
She knew her danger, and had no desire  
Of reformation in the gallant 'squire ;  
And felt an envious pleasure in her breast  
To see the rector daunted and distress'd.

Again the uncle to the youth applied—  
' Cast, my dear lad, that cursed gloom aside :  
There are for all things time and place ; appear  
Grave in your pulpit, and be merry here :  
Now take your wine—for woes a sure resource,  
And the best prelude to a long discourse.'

James half obey'd, but cast an angry eye  
On the fair lass, who still stood watchful by ;  
Resolving thus, ' I have my fears—but still  
I must perform my duties, and I will ;  
No love, no interest, shall my mind control ;  
Better to lose my comforts than my soul ;  
Better my uncle's favour to abjure,  
Than the upbraidings of my heart endure.'

He took his glass, and then address'd the  
'squire :

' I feel not well, permit me to retire.'  
The 'squire conceived that the ensuing day  
Gave him these terrors for the grand essay,  
When he himself should this young preacher  
try,

And stand before him with observant eye ;  
This raised compassion in his manly breast,  
And he would send the rector to his rest :  
Yet first, in soothing voice—' A moment stay,  
And these suggestions of a friend obey ;  
Treasure these hints, if fame or peace you  
prize—

The bottle emptied, I shall close my eyes.

' On every priest a two-fold care attends,  
To prove his talents, and insure his friends :  
First, of the first—your stores at once produce,  
And bring your reading to its proper use :  
On doctrines dwell, and every point enforce  
By quoting much, the scholar's sure resource ;  
For he alone can show us on each head  
What ancient schoolmen and sage fathers said :

No worth has knowledge, if you fail to  
show

How well you studied, and how much you  
know :

Is faith your subject, and you judge it right  
On theme so dark to cast a ray of light ;  
Be it that faith the orthodox maintain,  
Found in the rubrick, what the creeds explain ;  
Fail not to show us on this ancient faith  
(And quote the passage) what some martyr  
saith :

Dwell not one moment on a faith that shocks  
The minds of men sincere and orthodox ;  
That gloomy faith, that robs the wounded  
mind

Of all the comfort it was wont to find  
From virtuous acts, and to the soul denies  
Its proper due for alms and charities ;  
That partial faith, that, weighing sins alone,  
Lets not a virtue for a fault atone ;  
That starving faith, that would our tables  
clear,

And make one dreadful Lent of all the year ;  
And cruel too, for this is faith that rends  
Confiding beauties from protecting friends ;  
A faith that all embracing, what a gloom  
Deep and terrific o'er the land would come !  
What scenes of horror would that time dis-  
close !

No sight but misery, and no sound but woes ;  
Your nobler faith, in loftier style convey'd,  
Shall be with praise and admiration paid :  
On points like these your hearers all admire  
A preacher's depth, and nothing more require ;  
Shall we a studious youth to college send,  
That every clown his words may comprehend ?  
'Tis for your glory, when your hearers own  
Your learning matchless, but the sense  
unknown.

' Thus honour gain'd, learn now to gain a  
friend,  
And the sure way is—never to offend ;  
For, James, consider—what your neighbours  
do

Is their own business, and concerns not you :  
Shun all resemblance to that forward race  
Who preach of sins before a sinner's face ;  
And seem as if they overlook'd a pew,  
Only to drag a failing man in view :  
Much should I feel, when groaning in disease,  
If a rough hand upon my limb should seize ;  
But great my anger, if this hand were found  
The very doctor's, who should make it sound :

So feel our minds, young priest, so doubly feel,  
When hurt by those whose office is to heal.

'Yet of our duties you must something tell,  
And must at times on sin and frailty dwell ;  
Here you may preach in easy, flowing style,  
How errors cloud us, and how sins defile :  
Here bring persuasive tropes and figures forth,  
To show the poor that wealth is nothing worth ;  
That they, in fact, possess an ample share  
Of the world's good, and feel not half its care ;  
Give them this comfort, and, indeed, my gout  
In its full vigour causes me some doubt ;  
And let it always, for your zeal, suffice,  
That vice you combat, in the abstract—vice :  
The very captious will be quiet then ;  
We all confess we are offending men :  
In lashing sin, of every stroke beware,  
For sinners feel, and sinners you must spare ;  
In general satire, every man perceives  
A slight attack, yet neither fears nor grieves ;  
But name th' offence, and you absolve the  
rest,

And point the dagger at a single breast.

'Yet are there sinners of a class so low,  
That you with safety may the lash bestow ;  
Poachers, and drunkards, idlerogues, who feed  
At others' cost, a mark'd correction need :  
And all the better sort, who see your zeal,  
Will love and reverence for their pastor feel ;  
Reverence for one who can inflict the smart,  
And love, because he deals them not a part.  
'Remember well what love and age advise ;

A quiet rector is a parish prize,  
Who in his learning has a decent pride ;  
Who to his people is a gentle guide ;  
Who only hints at failings that he sees ;  
Who loves his glebe, his patron, and his ease,  
And finds the way to fame and profit is to  
please.'

The nephew answer'd not, except a sigh  
And look of sorrow might be term'd reply ;  
He saw the fearful hazard of his state,  
And held with truth and safety strong debate ;  
Nor long he reason'd, for the zealous youth  
Resolved, though timid, to profess the truth ;  
And though his friend should like a lion roar,  
Truth would he preach, and neither less nor  
more.

The bells had toll'd—arrived the time of  
prayer,

The flock assembled, and the squire was there:  
And now can poet sing, or proseman say,  
The disappointment of that trying day ?

As he who long had train'd a favourite steed,  
(Whose blood and bone gave promise of his  
speed,)

Sanguine with hope, he runs with partial eye  
O'er every feature, and his bets are high ;  
Of triumph sure, he sees the rivals start,  
And waits their coming with exulting heart ;  
Forestalling glory, with impatient glance,  
And sure to see his conquering steed advance ;  
The conquering steed advances—luckless day !  
A rival's Herod bears the prize away.  
Nor second his, nor third, but lagging last,  
With hanging head he comes, by all surpass'd :  
Surprise and wrath the owner's mind inflame,  
Love turns to scorn, and glory ends in  
shame ;—

Thus waited, high in hope, the partial 'squire,  
Eager to hear, impatient to admire :  
When the young preacher in the tones that  
find

A certain passage to the kindling mind,  
With air and accent strange, impressive, sad,  
Alarm'd the judge—he trembled for the lad ;  
But when the text announced the power of  
grace,

Amazement scowl'd upon his clouded face,  
At this degenerate son of his illustrious race ;  
Staring he stood, till hope again arose,  
That James might well define the words he  
chose :

For this he listen'd—but, alas ! he found  
The preacher always on forbidden ground.

And now the uncle left the hated pew,  
With James, and James's conduct in his view ;  
A long farewell to all his favourite schemes !  
For now no crazed fanatic's frantic dreams  
Seem'd vile as James's conduct, or as James :  
All he had long derided, hated, fear'd,  
This from the chosen youth the uncle heard ;—  
The needless pause, the fierce disorder'd air,  
The groan for sin, the vehemence of prayer,  
Gave birth to wrath, that, in a long dis-  
course

Of grace, triumphant rose to four-fold force ;  
He found his thoughts despised, his rules  
transgress'd,

And while the anger kindled in his breast,  
The pain must be endured that could not be  
express'd :

Each new idea more inflamed his ire,  
As fuel thrown upon a rising fire :  
A hearer yet, he sought by threatening sign  
To ease his heart, and awe the young divine ;

But James refused those angry looks to meet,  
Till he dismiss'd his flock, and left his seat :  
Exhausted then he felt his trembling frame,  
But fix'd his soul—his sentiments the same ;  
And therefore wise it seem'd to fly from rage,  
And seek for shelter in his parsonage :  
There, if forsaken, yet consoled to find  
Some comforts left, though not a few resign'd ;  
There, if he lost an erring parent's love,  
An honest conscience must the cause approve ;  
If the nice palate were no longer fed,  
The mind enjoy'd delicious thoughts instead ;  
And if some part of earthly good was flown,  
Still was the tithe of ten good farms his own.

Fear now, and discord, in the village reign,  
The cool remonstrate, and the meek complain ;  
But there is war within, and wisdom pleads  
in vain :

Now dreads the uncle, and proclaims his  
dread,  
Lest the boy-priest should turn each rustic  
head ;

The certain converts cost him certain wo,  
The doubtful fear lest they should join the foe :  
Matrons of old, with whom he used to joke,  
Now pass his Honour with a pious look ;  
Lasses, who met him once with lively airs,  
Now cross his way, and gravely walk to prayers :  
An old companion, whom he long has loved,  
By coward fears confess'd his conscience  
moved ;

As the third bottle gave its spirit forth,  
And they bore witness to departed worth,  
The friend arose, and he too would depart :—  
' Man,' said the 'squire, ' thou wert not wont  
to start ;

Hast thou attended to that foolish boy,  
Who would abridge all comforts, or destroy ? '  
Yes, he had listen'd, who had slumber'd  
long,

And was convinced that something must be  
wrong :

But, though affected, still his yielding heart,  
And craving palate, took the uncle's part ;  
Wine now oppress'd him, who, when free  
from wine,

Could seldom clearly utter his design ;  
But though by nature and indulgence weak,  
Yet, half converted, he resolved to speak ;  
And, speaking, own'd, ' that in his mind the  
youth

Had gifts and learning, and that truth was  
truth :

The 'squire he honour'd, and, for his poor part,  
He hated nothing like a hollow heart :  
But 'twas a maxim he had often tried,  
That right was right, and there he would  
abide ;

He honour'd learning, and he would confess  
The preacher had his talents—more or less :  
Why not agree ? he thought the young divine  
Had no such strictness—they might drink  
and dine ;

For them sufficient—but he said before,—  
That truth was truth, and he would drink no  
more.'

This heard the 'squire with mix'd contempt  
and pain ;

He fear'd the priest this recreant sot would  
gain.

The favourite nymph, though not a convert  
made,

Conceived the man she scorn'd her cause  
would aid ;

And when the spirits of her lord were low,  
The lass presumed the wicked cause to show :  
' It was the wretched life his Honour led,  
And would draw vengeance on his guilty head ;  
Their loves (Heav'n knew how dreadfully  
distress'd

The thought had made her !) were as yet  
unbless'd :

And till the church had sanction'd '—Here  
she saw

The wrath that forced her trembling to with-  
draw.

Add to these outward ills, some inward  
light,

That show'd him all was not correct and right :  
Though now he less indulged—and to the poor,  
From day to day, sent alms from door to door ;  
Though he some ease from easy virtues found,  
Yet conscience told him he could not com-  
pound ;

But must himself the darling sin deny,  
Change the whole heart—but here a heavy  
sigh

Proclaim'd, ' How vast the toil ! and ah !  
how weak am I ! '

James too has trouble—he divided sees  
A parish, once harmonious and at ease :  
With him united are the simply meek,  
The warm, the sad, the nervous, and the  
weak ;

The rest his uncle's, save the few beside,  
Who own no doctrine, and obey no guide ;

Withstragglers of each adverse camp, who lend  
Their aid to both, but each in turn offend.

Though zealous still, yet he begins to feel  
The heat too fierce, that glows in vulgar zeal ;  
With pain he hears his simple friends relate  
Their week's experience, and their woful state :  
With small temptation struggling every hour.  
And bravely battling with the tempting power ;  
His inward sense is hurt by strange complaints  
Of inward motions in these warring saints ;  
Who never cast on sinful bait a look  
But they perceive the devil at the hook :

Grieved, yet compell'd to smile, he finds it  
hard

Against the blunders of conceit to guard ;  
He sighs to hear the jests his converts cause,  
He cannot give their erring zeal applause ;  
But finds it inconsistent to condemn  
The flights and follies he has nursed in them :  
These, in opposing minds, contempt produce,  
Or mirth occasion, or provoke abuse ;  
On each momentous theme disgrace they  
bring,  
And give to Scorn her poison and her sting.

## TALE XVI. THE CONFIDANT

Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon,  
With fresh suspicions ?

*Othello*, Act iii, Scene 3.

Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy  
cheeks,

And given my treasures and my rights of thee  
To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy ?

*1 Henry IV*, Act ii, Scene 3.

It is excellent

To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous  
To use it as a giant.

*Measure for Measure*, Act ii, Scene 2.

ANNA was young and lovely—in her eye  
The glance of beauty, in her cheek the dye ;  
Her shape was slender, and her features small,  
But graceful, easy, unaffected all :  
The liveliest tints her youthful face disclosed ;  
There beauty sparkled, and there health  
reposed ;

For the pure blood that flush'd that rosy cheek  
Spoke what the heart forbade the tongue to  
speak ;

And told the feelings of that heart as well,  
Nay, with more candour than the tongue  
could tell :

Though this fair lass had with the wealthy  
dwelt,

Yet like the damsel of the cot she felt ;  
And, at the distant hint or dark surmise,  
The blood into the mantling cheek would rise.

Now Anna's station frequent terrors  
wrought

In one whose looks were with such meaning  
fraught ;

For on a lady, as an humble friend,  
It was her painful office to attend.

Her duties here were of the usual kind—  
And some the body harass'd, some the mind :  
Billets she wrote, and tender stories read,  
To make the lady sleepy in her bed ;  
She play'd at whist, but with inferior skill,  
And heard the summons as a call to drill ;  
Music was ever pleasant till she play'd  
At a request that no request convey'd ;  
The lady's tales with anxious looks she heard,  
For she must witness what her friend averr'd ;  
The lady's taste she must in all approve,  
Hate whom she hated, whom she loved must  
love ;

These with the various duties of her place,  
With care she studied, and perform'd with  
grace ;  
She veil'd her troubles in a mask of ease,  
And show'd her pleasure was a power to  
please.

Such were the damsel's duties ; she was  
poor—

Above a servant, but with service more :  
Men on her face with careless freedom gazed,  
Nor thought how painful was the glow they  
raised ;

A wealthy few to gain her favour tried,  
But not the favour of a grateful bride :  
They spoke their purpose with an easy air,  
That shamed and frighten'd the dependent  
fair :

Past time she view'd, the passing time to  
cheat,

But nothing found to make the present  
sweet ;

With pensive soul she read life's future page,  
And saw dependent, poor, repining age.

But who shall dare t' assert what *years* may  
bring,

When wonders from the passing *hour* may  
spring?—

There dwelt a yeoman in the place, whose  
mind

Was gentle, generous, cultivated, kind;  
For thirty years he labour'd; fortune then  
Placed the mild rustic with superior men:  
A richer Stafford who had lived to save,  
What he had treasured to the poorer gave;  
Who with a sober mind that treasure view'd,  
And the slight studies of his youth renew'd:  
He not profoundly, but discreetly read,  
And a fair mind with useful culture fed;  
Then thought of marriage—'But the great,'  
said he,

'I shall not suit, nor will the meaner me:'

Anna he saw, admired her modest air;  
He thought her virtuous, and he knew her  
fair;

Love raised his pity for her humble state,  
And prompted wishes for her happier fate;  
No pride in money would his feelings wound,  
Nor vulgar manners hurt him and confound:  
He then the lady at the hall address'd,  
Sought her consent, and his regard express'd;  
Yet if some cause his earnest wish denied,  
He begg'd to know it, and he bow'd and sigh'd.

The lady own'd that she was loth to part,  
But praised the damsel for her gentle heart,  
Her pleasing person, and her blooming health;  
But ended thus, 'Her virtue is her wealth.'

'Then is she rich!' he cried, with lively  
air;

'But whence, so please you, came a lass so  
fair?'

'A placeman's child was Anna, one who  
died

And left a widow by afflictions tried;  
She to support her infant daughter strove,  
But early left the object of her love;  
Her youth, her beauty, and her orphan-state  
Gave a kind countless interest in her fate;  
With her she dwelt, and still might dwelling  
be,

When the earl's folly caused the lass to flee;  
A second friend was she compell'd to shun,  
By the rude offers of an uncheck'd son;  
I found her then, and with a mother's love  
Regard the gentle girl whom you approve;

Yet, e'en with me protection is not peace,  
Nor man's designs, nor beauty's trial, cease;  
Like sordid boys by costly fruit they feel,  
They will not purchase, but they try to steal.'

Now this good lady, like a witness true,  
Told but the truth, and all the truth she knew;  
And 'tis our duty and our pain to show  
Truth this good lady had not means to know.  
Yes, there was lock'd within the damsel's  
breast

A fact important to be now confess'd;  
Gently, my muse, th' afflicting tale relate,  
And have some feeling for a sister's fate.

Where Anna dwelt, a conquering hero  
came,—

An Irish captain, Sedley was his name;  
And he too had that same prevailing art,  
That gave soft wishes to the virgin's heart:  
In years they differ'd; he had thirty seen  
When this young beauty counted just fifteen;  
But still they were a lovely lively pair,  
And trod on earth as if they trod on air.

On love, delightful theme! the captain dwelt  
With force still growing with the hopes he felt;  
But with some caution and reluctance told,  
He had a father crafty, harsh, and old;  
Who, as possessing much, would much expect,  
Or both, for ever, from his love reject:  
Why then offence to one so powerful give,  
Who (for their comfort) had not long to live?

With this poor prospect the deluded maid,  
In words confiding, was indeed betray'd;  
And, soon as terrors in her bosom rose,  
The hero fled; they hinder'd his repose.  
Deprived of him she to a parent's breast  
Her secret trusted, and her pains impress'd:  
Let her to town (so prudence urged) repair,  
To shun disgrace, at least to hide it there;  
But ere she went, the luckless damsel pray'd  
A chosen friend might lend her timely  
aid:

'Yes! my soul's sister, my Eliza, come,  
Hear her last sigh, and ease thy Anna's  
doom:'

'Tis a fool's wish,' the angry father cried,  
But, lost in troubles of his own, complied;  
And dear Eliza to her friend was sent,  
T' indulge that wish, and be her punishment:  
The time arrived, and brought a tenfold dread;  
The time was past, and all the terror fled;  
The infant died; the face resumed each  
charm,

And reason now brought trouble and alarm:

'Should her Eliza—no! she was too just,  
Too good and kind—but ah! too young to  
trust.'

Anna return'd, her former place resumed,  
And faded beauty with new grace re-bloom'd;  
And if some whispers of the past were heard,  
They died innoxious, as no cause appear'd;  
But other cares on Anna's bosom press'd,  
She saw her father gloomy and distress'd;  
He died o'erwhelm'd with debt, and soon was  
shed

The filial sorrow o'er a mother dead:  
She sought Eliza's arms, that faithful friend  
was wed;

Then was compassion by the countess shown,  
And all th' adventures of her life are known.

And now beyond her hopes—no longer tried  
By slavish awe—she lived a yeoman's bride;  
Then bless'd her lot, and with a grateful mind  
Was careful, cheerful, vigilant, and kind:  
The gentle husband felt supreme delight,  
Bless'd by her joy, and happy in her sight;  
He saw with pride in every friend and guest  
High admiration and regard express'd:  
With greater pride, and with superior joy,  
He look'd exulting on his first-born boy;  
To her fond breast the wife her infant strain'd,  
Some feelings utter'd, some were not explain'd;  
And she enraptured with her treasure grew,  
The sight familiar, but the pleasure new.

Yet there appear'd within that tranquil  
state

Some threat'ning prospect of uncertain fate;  
Between the married when a secret lies,  
It wakes suspicion from enforced disguise:  
Still thought the wife upon her absent friend,  
With all that must upon her truth depend;  
'There is no being in the world beside,  
Who can discover what that friend will hide;  
Who knew the fact, knew not my name or  
state,

Who these can tell cannot the fact relate;  
But thou, Eliza, canst the whole impart,  
And all my safety is thy generous heart.'

Mix'd with these fears—but light and  
transient these—

Fled years of peace, prosperity, and ease;  
So tranquil all that scarce a gloomy day  
For days of gloom unmix'd prepared the way:  
One eve, the wife, still happy in her state,  
Sang gaily, thoughtless of approaching fate;  
Then came a letter, that (received in dread  
Not unobserved) she in confusion read;

The substance this—'Her friend rejoiced to  
find

That she had riches with a grateful mind;  
While poor Eliza had from place to place  
Been lured by hope to labour for disgrace;  
That every scheme her wandering husband  
tried,  
Pain'd while he lived, and perish'd when he  
died.'

She then of want in angry style complain'd,  
Her child a burthen to her life remain'd,  
Her kindred shunn'd her prayers, no friend  
her soul sustain'd.

'Yet why neglected? Dearest Anna knew  
Her worth once tried, her friendship ever true;  
She hoped, she trusted, though by wants  
oppress'd,

To lock the treasured secret in her breast;  
Yet, vex'd by trouble, must apply to one,  
For kindness due to her for kindness done.'

In Anna's mind was tumult, in her face  
Flushings of dread had momentary place:  
'I must,' she judged, 'these cruel lines expose,  
Or fears, or worse than fears, my crime  
disclose.'

The letter shown, he said, with sober smile—  
'Anna, your friend has not a friendly style:  
Say, where could you with this fair lady dwell,  
Who boasts of secrets that she scorns to tell?'  
'At school,' she answer'd: he 'at school!'  
replied;

'Nay, then I know the secrets you would hide:  
Some longings these, without dispute,  
Some youthful gaspings for forbidden fruit:  
Why so disorder'd, love? are such the crimes,  
That give us sorrow in our graver times?  
Come, take a present for your friend, and rest  
In perfect peace—you find you are confess'd.'

This cloud, though past, alarm'd the con-  
scious wife,

Presaging gloom and sorrow for her life;  
Who to her answer join'd a fervent prayer,  
That her Eliza would a sister spare:  
If she again—but was there cause?—should  
send,

Let her direct—and then she named a friend:  
A sad expedient untried friends to trust,  
And still to fear the tried may be unjust:  
Such is his pain, who, by his debt oppress'd,  
Seeks by new bonds a temporary rest.

Few were her peaceful days till Anna read  
The words she dreaded, and had cause to  
dread:—

'Did she believe, did she, unkind, suppose  
That thus Eliza's friendship was to close?  
No! though she tried, and her desire was  
plain,

To break the friendly bond, she strove in vain:  
Ask'd she for silence? why so loud the call,  
And yet the token of her love so small?  
By means like these will you attempt to bind  
And check the movements of an injured mind?  
Poor as I am, I shall be proud to show  
What dangerous secrets I may safely know:  
Secrets to men of jealous minds convey'd,  
Have made a noble house in ruins laid:  
Anna, I trust, although with wrongs beset,  
And urged by want, I shall be faithful yet;  
But what temptation may from these arise,  
To take a slighted woman by surprise,  
Becomes a subject for your serious care—  
For who offends, must for offence prepare.'

Perplex'd, dismay'd, the wife foresaw her  
doom;

A day deferr'd was yet a day to come;  
But still, though painful her suspended state,  
She dreaded more the crisis of her fate;  
Better to die than Stafford's scorn to meet,  
And her strange friend perhaps would be  
discreet:

Presents she sent, and made a strong appeal  
To woman's feelings, begging her to feel;  
With too much force she wrote of jealous men,  
And her tears falling spoke beyond the pen;  
Eliza's silence she again implored,  
And promised all that prudence could afford.

For looks composed and careless Anna tried;  
She seem'd in trouble, and unconscious sigh'd:  
The faithful husband, who devoutly loved  
His silent partner, with concern reproved:  
'What secret sorrows on my Anna press,  
That love may not partake, nor care redress?'  
'None, none,' she answer'd, with a look so  
kind,

That the fond man determined to be blind.

A few succeeding weeks of brief repose  
In Anna's cheek revived the faded rose;  
A hue like this the western sky displays,  
That glows awhile, and withers as we gaze.

Again the friend's tormenting letter came—  
'The wants she suffer'd were affection's  
shame;

She with her child a life of terrors led,  
Unhappy fruit! but of a lawful bed:  
Her friend was tasting every bliss in life,  
The joyful mother, and the wealthy wife;

While she was placed in doubt, in fear, in want,  
To starve on trifles that the happy grant;  
Poorly for all her faithful silence paid,  
And tantalized by ineffectual aid:  
She could not thus a beggar's lot endure;  
She wanted something permanent and sure:  
If they were friends, then equal be their lot,  
And she was free to speak if they were not.'

Despair and terror seized the wife, to find  
The artful workings of a vulgar mind:  
Money she had not, but the hint of dress  
Taught her new bribes, new terrors to redress:  
She with such feeling then described her woes,  
That envy's self might on the view repose;  
Then to a mother's pains she made appeal,  
And painted grief like one compell'd to feel.

Yes! so she felt, that in her air, her face,  
In every purpose, and in every place;  
In her slow motion, in her languid mien,  
The grief, the sickness of her soul were seen  
Of some mysterious ill the husband sure,  
Desired to trace it, for he hoped to cure;  
Something he knew obscurely, and had seen  
His wife attend a cottage on the green;  
Love, loth to wound, endured conjecture long,  
Till fear would speak, and spoke in language  
strong.

'All I must know, my Anna—truly know  
Whence these emotions, terrors, troubles flow;  
Give me thy grief, and I will fairly prove  
Mine is no selfish, no ungenerous love.'

Now Anna's soul the seat of strife became,  
Fear with respect contended, love with shame;  
But fear prevailing was the ruling guide,  
Prescribing what to show and what to hide.

'It is my friend,' she said—'but why  
disclose

A woman's weakness struggling with her woes?  
Yes, she has grieved me by her fond complaints,

The wrongs she suffers, the distress she paints:  
Something we do—but she afflicts me still,  
And says, with power to help, I want the will;  
This plaintive story I pity and excuse,  
Help when I can, and grieve when I refuse  
But here my useless sorrows I resign,  
And will be happy in a love like thine.'

The husband doubted; he was kind but  
cool:—

'Tis a strong friendship to arise at school;  
Once more then, love, once more the sufferer  
aid,—

I too can pity, but I must upbraid:



Of these vain feelings then thy bosom free,  
Nor be o'erwhelm'd by useless sympathy.'

The wife again despatch'd the useless bribe,  
Again essay'd her terrors to describe;  
Again with kindest words entreated peace,  
And begg'd her offerings for a time might  
cease.

A calm succeeded, but too like the one  
That causes terror ere the storm comes on :  
A secret sorrow lived in Anna's heart,  
In Stafford's mind a secret fear of art ;  
Not long they lasted—this determined foe  
Knew all her claims, and nothing would  
forego ;

Again her letter came, where Anna read,  
' My child, one cause of my distress, is dead :  
Heav'n has my infant : ' ' Heartless wretch ! '   
she cried,

' Is this thy joy ? ' ' I am no longer tied :  
Now will I, hast'ning to my friend, partake  
Her cares and comforts, and no more forsake ;  
Now shall we both in equal station move,  
Save that my friend enjoys a husband's love.'

Complaint and threats so strong the wife  
amazed,  
Who wildly on her cottage-neighbour gazed ;  
Her tones, her trembling, first betray'd her  
grief ;

When floods of tears gave anguish its relief.  
She fear'd that Stafford would refuse assent,  
And knew her selfish friend would not relent ;  
She must petition, yet delay'd the task,  
Ashamed, afraid, and yet compell'd to ask ;  
Unknown to him some object filled her mind,  
And, once suspicious, he became unkind :  
They sate one evening, each absorb'd in gloom ;  
When, hark ! a noise and rushing to the room,  
The friend tripp'd lightly in, and laughing  
said, ' I come.'

Anna received her with an anxious mind,  
And meeting whisper'd, ' Is Eliza kind ? '   
Reserved and cool, the husband sought to  
prove  
The depth and force of this mysterious love.  
To nought that pass'd between the stranger-  
friend

' And his meek partner seem'd he to attend ;  
But, anxious, listen'd to the lightest word  
That might some knowledge of his guest  
afford ;

And learn the reason one to him so dear  
Should feel such fondness, yet betray such  
fear.

Soon he perceived this uninvited guest,  
Unwelcome too, a sovereign power possess'd ;  
Lofly she was and careless, while the meek  
And humbled Anna was afraid to speak :  
As mute she listen'd with a painful smile,  
Her friend sate laughing and at ease the while,  
Telling her idle tales with all the glee  
Of careless and unfeeling levity.

With calm good sense he knew his wife endued,  
And now with wounded pride her conduct  
view'd ;

Her speech was low, her every look convey'd—  
' I am a slave, subservient and afraid.'   
All trace of comfort vanish'd if she spoke,  
The noisy friend upon her purpose broke ;  
To her remarks with insolence replied,  
And her assertions doubted or denied ;  
While the meek Anna like an infant shook,  
Wo-struck and trembling at the serpent's look.

' There is,' said Stafford, ' yes, there is a  
cause—

This creature frights her, overpowers and awes.'   
Six weeks had pass'd—' In truth, my love,  
this friend

Has liberal notions ; what does she intend ?  
Without a hint she came, and will she stay  
Till she receives the hint to go away ? '

Confused the wife replied, in spite of truth,  
' I love the dear companion of my youth.'

' 'Tis well,' said Stafford ; ' then your loves  
renew ;

Trust me, your rivals, Anna, will be few.'

Though playful this, she felt too much  
distress'd

T' admit the consolation of a jest ;  
Ill she repos'd, and in her dreams would sigh,  
And murmuring forth her anguish beg to die ;  
With sunken eye, slow pace, and pallid cheek,  
She look'd confusion, and she fear'd to speak.

All this the friend beheld, for, quick of sight,  
She knew the husband eager for her flight ;  
And that by force alone she could retain  
The lasting comforts she had hope to gain :  
She now perceived, to win her post for life,  
She must infuse fresh terrors in the wife ;  
Must bid to friendship's feeble ties adieu,  
And boldly claim the object in her view :  
She saw the husband's love, and knew the  
power

Her friend might use in some propitious hour.  
Meantime the anxious wife, from pure  
distress

Assuming courage, said, ' I will confess ; '

But with her children felt a parent's pride,  
And sought once more the hated truth to hide.

Offended, grieved, impatient, Stafford bore  
The odious change till he could bear no more ;  
A friend to truth, in speech and action plain,  
He held all fraud and cunning in disdain ;  
But fraud to find, and falsehood to detect,  
For once he fled to measures indirect.

One day the friends were seated in that  
room

The guest with care adorn'd, and named her  
home :

To please the eye, there curious prints were  
placed,

And some light volumes to amuse the taste ;  
Letters and music, on a table laid,  
The favourite studies of the fair betray'd ;  
Beneath the window was the toilet spread,  
And the fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed.

In Anna's looks and falling tears were seen  
How interesting had their subjects been :  
' Oh ! then,' resumed the friend, ' I plainly  
find

That you and Stafford know each other's  
mind ;

I must depart, must on the world be thrown,  
Like one discarded, worthless and unknown ;  
But shall I carry, and to please a foe,  
A painful secret in my bosom ? No !

Think not your friend a reptile you may tread  
Beneath your feet, and say, the worm is dead ;  
I have some feeling, and will not be made  
The scorn of her whom love cannot persuade :  
Would not your word, your slightest wish,  
effect

All that I hope, petition, or expect ?

The power you have, but you the use de-  
cline—

Proof that you feel not, or you fear not  
mine.

There was a time, when I, a tender maid,  
Flew at a call, and your desires obey'd ;  
A very mother to the child became,  
Consoled your sorrow, and conceal'd your  
shame ;

But now, grown rich and happy, from the door  
You thrust a bosom-friend, despised and poor ;  
That child alive, its mother might have known  
The hard, ungrateful spirit she has shown.'

Here paused the guest, and Anna cried at  
length—

' You try me, cruel friend ! beyond my  
strength ;

Would I had been beside my infant laid,  
Where none would vex me, threaten, or  
upbraid.'

In Anna's looks the friend beheld despair ;  
Herspeech she soften'd, and composed her air ;  
Yet, while professing love, she answered still—  
' You can befriend me, but you want the will.'  
They parted thus, and Anna went her way,  
To shed her secret sorrows, and to pray.

Stafford, amused with books, and fond of  
home,

By reading oft dispell'd the evening gloom ;  
History or tale—all heard him with delight,  
And thus was pass'd this memorable night.

The listening friend bestow'd a flattering  
smile ;

A sleeping boy the mother held the while ;  
And ere she fondly bore him to his bed,  
On his fair face the tear of anguish shed.

And now his task resumed, ' My tale,'  
said he,

' Is short and sad, short may our sadness  
be !'—

The Caliph Harun \*, as historians tell,  
Ruled, for a tyrant, admirably well ;  
Where his own pleasures were not touch'd,  
to men

He was humane, and sometimes even then ;  
Harun was fond of fruits, and gardens fair,  
And wo to all whom he found poaching there :  
Among his pages was a lively boy,  
Eager in search of every trifling joy ;  
His feelings vivid, and his fancy strong,  
He sigh'd for pleasure while he shrank from  
wrong ;

When by the caliph in the garden placed  
He saw the treasures which he long'd to taste ;  
And oft alone he ventured to behold  
Rich hanging fruits with rind of glowing gold ;  
Too long he staid forbidden bliss to view,  
His virtue failing, as his longings grew ;  
Athirst and wearied with the noon-tide heat,  
Fate to the garden led his luckless feet ;  
With eager eyes and open mouth he stood,  
Smelt the sweet breath, and touch'd the  
fragrant food ;

The tempting beauty sparkling in the sun  
Charm'd his young sense—he ate, and was  
undone :

\* The sovereign here meant is the Haroun  
Alraschid, or Harun al Raschid, who died early  
in the ninth century : he is often the hearer,  
and sometimes the hero, of a tale in the Arabian  
Nights' Entertainments.

When the fond glutton paused, his eyes around  
He turn'd, and eyes upon him turning found ;  
Pleased he beheld the spy, a brother-page,  
A friend allied in office and in age ;  
Who promised much that secret he would be,  
But high the price he fix'd on secrecy.

"Were you suspected, my unhappy friend,"  
Began the boy, "where would your sorrows  
end ?

In all the palace there is not a page  
The caliph would not torture in his rage :  
I think I see thee now impaled alive,  
Writhing in pangs—but come, my friend !  
revive ;

Had some beheld you, all your purse contains  
Could not have saved you from terrific pains ;  
I scorn such meanness ; and, if not in debt,  
Would not an asper on your folly set."

'The hint was strong ; young Osmyn  
search'd his store  
For bribes, and found he soon could bribe no  
more ;

That time arrived, for Osmyn's stock was  
small,

And the young tyrant now possess'd it all ;  
The cruel youth, with his companions near,  
Gave the broad hint that raised the sudden  
fear ;

Th' ungenerous insult now was daily shown,  
And Osmyn's peace and honest pride were  
flown ;

Then came augmenting woes, and fancy strong  
Drew forms of suffering, a tormenting throng ;  
He felt degraded, and the struggling mind  
Dared not be free, and could not be resign'd ;  
And all his pains and fervent prayers obtain'd  
Was truce from insult, while the fears re-  
main'd.

'One day it chanced that this degraded boy  
And tyrant-friend were fix'd at their employ ;  
Who now had thrown restraint and form  
aside,

And for his bribe in plainer speech applied :  
"Long have I waited, and the last supply  
Was but a pittance, yet how patient I !  
But give me now what thy first terrors gave,  
My speech shall praise thee, and my silence  
save."

Osmyn had found, in many a dreadful  
day,

The tyrant fiercer when he seem'd in play :  
He begg'd forbearance ; "I have not to give ;  
Spare me awhile, although 'tis pain to live :

Oh ! had that stolen fruit the power possess'd  
To war with life, I now had been at rest."

"So fond of death," replied the boy, "'tis  
plain

Thou hast no certain notion of the pain ;  
But to the caliph were a secret shown,  
Death has no pain that would be then  
unknown."

'Now,' says the story, 'in a closet near,  
The monarch seated, chanced the boys to hear ;  
There oft he came, when wearied on his  
throne,

To read, sleep, listen, pray, or be alone.

'The tale proceeds, when first the caliph  
found

That he was robb'd, although alone, he  
frown'd ;

And swore in wrath, that he would send the  
boy

Far from his notice, favour, or employ ;  
But gentler movements soothed his ruffled  
mind,

And his own failings taught him to be kind.  
'Relenting thoughts then painted Osmyn  
young,

His passion urgent, and temptation strong ;  
And that he suffer'd from that villain-spy  
Pains worse than death till he desired to die ;  
Then if his morals had received a stain,

His bitter sorrows made him pure again :  
To Reason, Pity lent her generous aid,

For one so tempted, troubled, and betray'd ;  
And a free pardon the glad boy restored  
To the kind presence of a gentle lord ;  
Who from his office and his country drove  
That traitor-friend, whom pains nor pray'rs  
could move ;

Who raised the fears no mortal could endure,  
And then with cruel av'rice sold the cure.

'My tale is ended ; but, to be applied,  
I must describe the place where caliphs hide.'

Here both the females look'd alarm'd,  
distress'd,

With hurried passions hard to be express'd.

'It was a closet by a chamber placed,  
Where slept a lady of no vulgar taste ;  
Her friend attended in that chosen room  
That she had honour'd and proclaim'd her  
home ;

To please the eye were chosen pictures placed,  
And some light volumes to amuse the taste ;  
Letters and music on a table laid,  
For much the lady wrote, and often play'd ;

Beneath the window was a toilet spread,  
And a fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed.'

He paused, he rose; with troubled joy the  
wife

Felt the new era of her changeful life;

Frankness and love appear'd in Stafford's  
face,

And all her trouble to delight gave  
place.

Twice made the guest an effort to sustain  
Her feelings, twice resumed her seat in vain,  
Nor could suppress her shame, nor could  
support her pain:

Quick she retired, and all the dismal night  
Thought of her guilt, her folly, and her flight;  
Then sought unseen her miserable home,  
To think of comforts lost, and brood on wants  
to come.

## TALE XVII. RESENTMENT

He hath a tear for pity, and a hand  
Open as day for melting charity;  
Yet, notwithstanding, being incensed, he's  
flint . . .

His temper, therefore, must be well observed.

*2 Henry IV, Act iv, Scene 4.*

Three or four wenches where I stood cried—  
'Alas! good soul!' and forgave him with all  
their hearts: but there's no heed to be taken  
of them; if Caesar had stabb'd their mothers,  
they would have done no less.

*Julius Caesar, Act i, Scene 2.*

How dost? . . . Art cold?

I'm cold myself—Where is this straw, my  
fellow?

The art of our necessities is strange,  
That can make vile things precious.

*King Lear, Act iii, Scene 2.*

FEMALES there are of unsuspicious mind,  
Easy and soft, and credulous and kind;  
Who, when offended for the twentieth time,  
Will hear th' offender and forgive the crime:  
And there are others whom, like these to cheat,  
Asks but the humblest effort of deceit;  
But they, once injured, feel a strong disdain,  
And, seldom pardoning, never trust again;  
Urged by religion, they forgive—but yet  
Guard the warm heart, and never more forget:  
Those are like wax—apply them to the fire,  
Melting, they take th' impressions you desire;  
Easy to mould, and fashion as you please,  
And again moulded with an equal ease:  
Like smelted iron these the forms retain,  
But once impress'd will never melt again.

A busy port a serious merchant made  
His chosen place to recommence his trade;  
And brought his lady, who, their children  
dead,

Their native seat of recent sorrow fled:

The husband duly on the quay was seen,  
The wife at home became at length serene;  
There in short time the social couple grew  
With all acquainted, friendly with a few;  
When the good lady, by disease assail'd,  
In vain resisted—hope and science fail'd:  
Then spake the female friends, by pity led,  
'Poor merchant Paul! what think ye? will  
he wed?

A quiet, easy, kind, religious man,  
Thus can he rest?—I wonder if he can.'

He too, as grief subsided in his mind,  
Gave place to notions of congenial kind;  
Grave was the man, as we have told before;  
His years were forty—he might pass for more;  
Composed his features were, his stature low,  
His air important, and his motion slow;  
His dress became him, it was neat and plain,  
The colour purple, and without a stain;  
His words were few, and special was his care  
In simplest terms his purpose to declare;  
No man more civil, sober, and discreet,  
More grave and courteous, you could seldom  
meet:

Though frugal he, yet sumptuous was his  
board,

As if to prove how much he could afford;  
For though reserved himself, he loved to see  
His table plenteous, and his neighbours free:  
Among these friends he sat in solemn style,  
And rarely soften'd to a sober smile;  
For this observant friends their reasons  
gave—

'Concerns so vast would make the idlest grave;  
And for such man to be of language free,  
Would seem incongruous as a singing tree:  
Trees have their music, but the birds they  
shield

The pleasing tribute for protection yield;

Each ample tree the tuneful choir defends,  
As this rich merchant cheers his happy  
friends !”

In the same town it was his chance to meet  
A gentle lady, with a mind discreet ;  
Neither in life's decline, nor bloom of youth,  
One fam'd for maiden modesty and truth :  
By nature cool, in pious habits bred,  
She look'd on lovers with a virgin's dread :  
Deceivers, rakes, and libertines were they,  
And harmless beauty their pursuit and prey ;  
As bad as giants in the ancient times  
Were modern lovers, and the same their  
crimes :

Soon as she heard of her all-conquering  
charms,

At once she fled to her defensive arms ;  
Conn'd o'er the tales her maiden aunt had told,  
And, statue-like, was motionless and cold ;  
From prayer of love, like that Pygmalion  
pray'd,

Ere the hard stone became the yielding  
maid—

A different change in this chaste nymph  
ensued,

And turn'd to stone the breathing flesh and  
blood :

Whatever youth described his wounded heart,  
'He came to rob her, and she scorn'd his art ;  
And who of raptures once presumed to speak,  
Told listening maids he thought them fond  
and weak :

But should a worthy man his hopes display  
In few plain words, and beg a *yes* or *no*,  
He would deserve an answer just and plain,  
Since adulation only moved disdain—  
Sir, if my friends object not, come again.'

Hence, our grave lover, though he liked the  
face,

Praised not a feature—dwelt not on a grace ;  
But in the simplest terms declared his state,  
'A widow'd man, who wish'd a virtuous mate ;  
Who fear'd neglect, and was compell'd to  
trust

Dependents wasteful, idle, or unjust ;  
Or should they not the trusted stores destroy,  
At best, they could not help him to enjoy ;  
But with her person and her prudence blest,  
His acts would prosper, and his soul have  
rest :

Would she be his ?"—'Why, that was much  
to say ;

She would consider : he awhile might stay ;

She liked his manners, and believed his word ;  
He did not flatter, flattery she abhor'd :  
It was her happy lot in peace to dwell—  
Would change make better what was now so  
well ?

But she would ponder.—'This,' he said,  
'was kind,'  
And begg'd to know 'when she had fix'd her  
mind.'

Romantic maidens would have scorn'd the  
air,

And the cool prudence of a mind so fair ;  
But well it pleased this wiser maid to find  
Her own mild virtues in her lover's mind.

His worldly wealth she sought, and quickly  
grew

Pleased with her search, and happy in the  
view

Of vessels freighted with abundant stores,  
Of rooms whose treasures press'd the groan-  
ing floors ;

And he of clerks and servants could display  
A little army, on a public day :

Was this a man like needy bard to speak  
Of balmy lip, bright eye, or rosy cheek ?

The sum appointed for her widow'd state,  
Fix'd by her friend, excited no debate ;  
Then the kind lady gave her hand and heart,  
And, never finding, never dealt with art :  
In his engagements she had no concern ;  
He taught her not, nor had she wish to learn :  
On him in all occasions she relied,

His word her surety, and his worth her  
pride.

When ship was launch'd, and merchant  
Paul had share,

A bounteous feast became the lady's care ;  
Who then her entry to the dinner made,  
In costly raiment, and with kind parade.

Call'd by this duty on a certain day,  
And robed to grace it in a rich array,  
Forth from her room with measured step she  
came,

Proud of th' event, and stately look'd the  
dame :

The husband met her at his study-door—  
'This way, my love—one moment and no  
more :

A trifling business—you will understand,  
The law requires that you affix your hand ;  
But first attend, and you shall learn the cause  
Why forms like these have been prescribed  
by laws :'

Then from his chair a man in black arose,  
And with much quickness hurried off his  
prose :

That ' Ellen Paul the wife, and so forth, freed  
From all control, her own the act and deed,  
And forasmuch '—said she, ' I've no  
distrust,

For he that asks it is discreet and just ;  
Our friends are waiting—where am I to  
sign ?—

There !—Now be ready when we meet to  
dine.'

This said, she hurried off in great delight,  
The ship was launch'd, and joyful was the  
night.

Now, says the reader, and in much disdain,  
This serious merchant was a rogue in grain ;  
A treacherous wretch, an artful, sober knave,  
And ten times worse for manners cool and  
grave ;

And she devoid of sense, to set her hand  
To scoundrel deeds she could not understand.

Alas ! 'tis true ; and I in vain had tried  
To soften crime, that cannot be denied ;  
And might have labour'd many a tedious  
verse

The latent cause of mischief to rehearse :  
Be it confess'd, that long, with troubled look,  
This trader view'd a huge accompting book  
(His former marriage for a time delay'd  
The dreaded hour, the present lent its aid) ;  
But he too clearly saw the evil day,  
And put the terror, by deceit, away ;  
Thus by connecting with his sorrows crime,  
He gain'd a portion of uneasy time.—

All this too late the injured lady saw ;  
What law had given, again she gave to law ;  
His guilt, her folly—these at once impress'd  
Their lasting feelings on her guileless breast.

' Shame I can bear,' she cried, ' and want  
sustain,

But will not see this guilty wretch again : '  
For all was lost, and he, with many a tear,  
Confess'd the fault—she turning scorn'd to  
hear.

To legal claims he yielded all his worth,  
But small the portion, and the wrong'd were  
wroth,

Nor to their debtor would a part allow ;  
And where to live he knew not—knew not  
how.

The wife a cottage found, and thither went  
The suppliant man, but she would not relent :

Thenceforth she utter'd with indignant tone,  
' I feel the misery, and will feel alone : '

He would turn servant for her sake, would  
keep

The poorest school ; the very streets would  
sweep,

To show his love—' It was already shown :  
And her affliction should be all her own.

His wants and weakness might have touch'd  
her heart,

But from his meanness she resolved to part.'

In a small alley was she lodged, beside  
Its humblest poor, and at the view she cried :  
' Welcome—yes ! let me welcome, if I can,  
The fortune dealt me by this cruel man ;  
Welcome this low thatch'd roof, this shatter'd  
door,

These walls of clay, this miserable floor ;  
Welcome my envied neighbours ; this, to you,  
Is all familiar—all to me is new :

You have no hatred to the loathsome meal ;  
Your firmer nerves no trembling terrors feel,  
Nor, what you must expose, desire you to  
conceal ;

What your coarse feelings bear without  
offence,

Disgusts my taste, and poisons every sense :  
Daily shall I your sad relations hear,  
Of wanton women, and of men severe ;  
There will dire curses, dreadful oaths abound,  
And vile expressions shock me and confound ;  
Noise of dull wheels, and songs with horrid  
words,

Will be the music that this lane affords ;  
Mirth that disgusts, and quarrels that degrade  
The human mind, must my retreat invade :

Hard is my fate ! yet easier to sustain,  
Than to abide with guilt and fraud again ;  
A grave impostor ! who expects to meet,  
In such grey locks and gravity, deceit ?  
Where the sea rages, and the billows roar,  
Men know the danger, and they quit the  
shore ;

But, be there nothing in the way descried,  
When o'er the rocks smooth runs the wicked  
tide—

Sinking unwarn'd, they execrate the shock,  
And the dread peril of the sunken rock.'

A frowning world had now the man to  
dread,

Taught in no arts, to no profession bred ;  
Pining in grief, beset with constant care,  
Wandering he went, to rest he knew not where.

Meantime the wife—but she abjured the name—  
Endured her lot, and struggled with the shame ;

When lo ! an uncle on the mother's side,  
In nature something, as in blood allied,  
Admired her firmness, his protection gave,  
And show'd a kindness she disdain'd to crave.

Frugal and rich the man, and frugal grew  
The sister-mind, without a selfish view ;  
And further still—the temp'rate pair agreed  
With what they saved the patient poor to feed :

His whole estate, when to the grave consign'd,  
Left the good kinsman to the kindred mind ;  
Assured that law, with spell secure and tight,  
Had fix'd it as her own peculiar right.

Now to her ancient residence removed,  
She lived as widow, well endow'd and loved ;  
Decent her table was, and to her door  
Came daily welcomed the neglected poor :  
The absent sick were soothed by her relief,  
As her free bounty sought the haunts of grief ;  
A plain and homely charity had she,  
And loved the objects of her alms to see ;  
With her own hands she dress'd the savoury meat,

With her own fingers wrote the choice receipt ;  
She heard all tales that injured wives relate,  
And took a double interest in their fate ;  
But of all husbands not a wretch was known  
So vile, so mean, so cruel, as her own.

This bounteous lady kept an active spy,  
To search th' abodes of want, and to supply ;  
The gentle Susan served the liberal dame—  
Unlike their notions, yet their deeds the same :  
No practised villain could a victim find,  
Than this stern lady more completely blind ;  
Nor (if detected in his fraud) could meet  
One less disposed to pardon a deceit ;  
The wrong she treasured, and on no pretence  
Received th' offender, or forgot th' offence :  
But the kind servant, to the thrice-proved knave

A fourth time listen'd, and the past forgave.  
First in her youth, when she was blithe and gay,

Came a smooth rogue, and stole her love away ;  
Then to another and another flew,  
To boast the wanton mischief he could do :  
Yet she forgave him, though so great her pain,

That she was never blithe or gay again.

Then came a spoiler, who, with villain-art,  
Implored her hand, and agonized her heart ;  
He seized her purse, in idle waste to spend  
With a vile woman, whom she call'd her friend ;

Five years she suffer'd—he had revell'd five—  
Then came to show her he was just alive ;  
Alone he came, his vile companion dead ;  
And he, a wand'ring pauper, wanting bread ;  
His body wasted, wither'd life and limb,  
When this kind soul became a slave to him ;  
Nay, she was sure that, should he now survive,  
No better husband would be left alive ;  
For him she mourn'd, and then, alone and poor,

Sought and found comfort at her lady's door :  
Ten years she served, and, mercy her employ,  
Her tasks were pleasure, and her duty joy.

Thus lived the mistress and the maid,  
design'd

Each other's aid—one cautious, and both kind :

Of at their window, working, they would sigh  
To see the aged and the sick go by ;  
Like wounded bees, that at their home arrive,  
Slowly and weak, but labouring for the hive.

The busy people of a mason's yard  
The curious lady view'd with much regard ;  
With steady motion she perceived them draw

Through blocks of stone the slowly-working saw ;

It gave her pleasure and surprise to see  
Among these men the signs of revelry :  
Cold was the season, and confined their view,  
Tedious their tasks, but merry were the crew :  
There she beheld an aged pauper wait,  
Patient and still, to take an humble freight ;  
Within the panniers on an ass he laid  
The ponderous grit, and for the portion paid ;  
This he re-sold, and, with each trifling gift,  
Made shift to live, and wretched was the shift.

Now will it be by every reader told  
Who was this humble trader, poor and old.—  
In vain an author would a name suppress,  
From the least hint a reader learns to guess ;  
Of children lost, our novels sometimes treat,  
We never care—assured again to meet :  
In vain the writer for concealment tries,  
We trace his purpose under all disguise ;  
Nay, though he tells us they are dead and gone,

Of whom we wot—they will appear anon ;

Our favourites fight, are wounded, hopeless lie,  
Survive they cannot—nay, they cannot die;  
Now, as these tricks and stratagems are known,  
'Tis best, at once, the simple truth to own.

This was the husband—in an humble shed  
He nightly slept, and daily sought his bread:  
Once for relief the weary man applied;  
'Your wife is rich,' the angry vestry cried:  
Alas! he dared not to his wife complain,  
Feeling her wrongs, and fearing her disdain:  
By various methods he had tried to live,  
But not one effort would subsistence give:  
He was an usher in a school, till noise  
Made him less able than the weaker boys;  
On messages he went, till he in vain  
Strove names, or words, or meanings to retain;  
Each small employment in each neighbouring  
town

By turn he took, to lay as quickly down:  
For, such his fate, he fail'd in all he plann'd,  
And nothing prosper'd in his luckless hand.

At his old home, his motive half suppress'd,  
He sought no more for riches, but for rest:  
There lived the bounteous wife, and at her gate  
He saw in cheerful groups the needy wait;  
'Had he a right with bolder hope t' apply?'  
He ask'd—was answer'd, and went groaning  
by:

For some remains of spirit, temper, pride,  
Forbade a prayer he knew would be denied.

Thus was the grieving man, with burthen'd  
ass,

Seen day by day along the street to pass:  
'Who is he, Susan? who the poor old man?  
He never calls—do make him, if you can.'—  
The conscious damsel still delay'd to speak,  
She stopp'd confused, and had her words to  
seek;

From Susan's fears the fact her mistress knew,  
And cried—'The wretch! what scheme has  
he in view?

Is this his lot?—but let him, let him feel—  
Who wants the courage, not the will to steal.'

A dreadful winter came, each day severe,  
Misty when mild, and icy cold when clear;  
And still the humble dealer took his load,  
Returning slow, and shivering on the road:  
The lady, still relentless, saw him come,  
And said—'I wonder, has the wretch a  
home?'

'A hut! a hovel!'—'Then his fate appears  
To suit his crime:'—'Yes lady, not his  
years;—

No! nor his sufferings—nor that form  
decay'd.'

'Well, let the parish give its paupers aid:  
You must the vileness of his acts allow;'

'And you, dear lady, that he feels it now.'  
'When such dissemblers on their deeds reflect,  
Can they the pity they refused expect?  
He that doth evil, evil shall he dread.'—  
'The snow,' quoth Susan, 'falls upon his  
bed—

It blows beside the thatch—it melts upon his  
head.'

'Tis weakness, child, for grieving guilt to  
feel.'

'Yes, but he never sees a wholesome meal;  
Through his bare dress appears his shrivell'd  
skin,

And ill he fares without, and worse within:  
With that weak body, lame, diseased, and  
slow,

What cold, pain, peril, must the sufferer  
know!'

'Think on his crime.'—'Yes, sure 'twas very  
wrong;

But look, (God bless him!) how he gropes  
along.'

'Brought me to shame.'—'Oh! yes, I know  
it all—

What cutting blast! and he can scarcely  
crawl;

He freezes as he moves—he dies! if he should  
fall:

With cruel fierceness drives this icy sleet—  
And must a Christian perish in the street,  
In sight of Christians?—There! at last, he  
lies;—

Nor unsupported can he ever rise;  
He cannot live.'—'But is he fit to die?'

Here Susan softly mutter'd a reply,  
Look'd round the room—said something of  
its state,

Dives the rich, and Lazarus at his gate;  
And then aloud—'In pity do behold  
The man affrighten'd, weeping, trembling,  
cold:

Oh! how those flakes of snow their entrance  
win

Through the poor rags, and keep the frost  
within;

His very heart seems frozen as he goes,  
Leading that starved companion of his woes:  
He tried to pray—his lips, I saw them move,  
And he so turn'd his piteous looks above;



But the fierce wind the willing heart opposed,  
And, ere he spoke, the lips in misery closed :  
Poor suffering object ! yes, for ease you  
pray'd,

And God will hear—he only, I'm afraid.'

'Peace! Susan, peace! Pain ever follows  
sin.'

'Ah! then,' thought Susan, 'when will ours  
begin ?

'When reach'd his home, to what a cheerless  
fire

And chilling bed will those cold limbs retire !  
Yet ragged, wretched as it is, that bed  
Takes half the space of his contracted shed ;  
I saw the thorns beside the narrow grate,  
With straw collected in a putrid state :  
There will he, kneeling, strive the fire to  
raise,

And that will warm him, rather than the blaze;  
The sullen, smoky blaze, that cannot last  
One moment after his attempt is past :  
And I so warmly and so purely laid,  
To sink to rest—indeed, I am afraid.'

'Know you his conduct ?'—'Yes, indeed,  
I know—

And how he wanders in the wind and snow :  
Safe in our rooms the threat'ning storm we  
hear,

But he feels strongly what we faintly fear.'  
'Wilful was rich, and he the storm defied ;  
Wilful is poor, and must the storm abide ;'  
Said the stern lady—'Tis in vain to feel ;  
Go and prepare the chicken for our meal.'

Susan her task reluctantly began,  
And utter'd as she went—'The poor old  
man !'

But while her soft and ever-yielding heart  
Made strong protest against her lady's part,  
The lady's self began to think it wrong,  
To feel so wrathful and resent so long.

'No more the wretch would she receive  
again,

No more behold him—but she would sus-  
tain ;

Great his offence, and evil was his mind—  
But he had suffer'd, and she would be kind :  
She spurn'd such baseness, and she found  
within

A fair acquittal from so foul a sin ;  
Yet she too err'd, and must of Heaven expect  
To be rejected, him should she reject.'

Susan was summon'd—'I'm about to do  
A foolish act, in part seduced by you ;

Go to the creature—say that I intend,  
Foe to his sins, to be his sorrow's friend ;  
Take, for his present comforts, food and  
wine,

And mark his feelings at this act of mine :  
Observe if shame be o'er his features spread,  
By his own victim to be soothed and fed ;  
But, this inform him, that it is not love  
That prompts my heart, that duties only  
move :

Say, that no merits in his favour plead,  
But miseries only, and his abject need ;  
Nor bring me grov'ling thanks, nor high-  
flown praise ;

I would his spirits, not his fancy raise :  
Give him no hope that I shall ever more  
A man so vile to my esteem restore ;  
But warn him rather, that, in time of rest,  
His crimes be all remember'd and con-  
fess'd :

I know not all that form the sinner's debt,  
But there is one that he must not forget.'

The mind of Susan prompted her with speed  
To act her part in every courteous deed :  
All that was kind she was prepared to say,  
And keep the lecture for a future day ;  
When he had all life's comforts by his side,  
Pity might sleep, and good advice be tried.

This done, the mistress felt disposed to look,  
As self-approving, on a pious book :  
Yet, to her native bias still inclined,  
She felt her act too merciful and kind ;  
But when, long musing on the chilling  
scene

So lately past—the frost and sleet so keen—  
The man's whole misery in a single view—  
Yes! she could think some pity was his  
due.

Thus fix'd, she heard not her attendant  
glide

With soft slow step—till, standing by her  
side,

The trembling servant gasp'd for breath, and  
shed

Relieving tears, then utter'd—'He is dead !'  
'Dead!' said the startled lady ; 'Yes, he  
fell

Close at the door where he was wont to dwell ;  
There his sole friend, the ass, was standing by,  
Half dead himself, to see his master die.'

'Expired he then, good Heaven! for want  
of food ?'

'No! crusts and water in a corner stood ;—

To have this plenty, and to wait so long,  
 And to be right too late, is doubly wrong :  
 Then, every day to see him totter by,  
 And to forbear—Oh ! what a heart had I !  
 ‘ Blame me not, child ; I tremble at the news.’  
 ‘ ’Tis my own heart,’ said Susan, ‘ I accuse :

To have this money in my purse—to know  
 What grief was his, and what to grief we owe ;  
 To see him often, always to conceive  
 How he must pine and languish, groan and grieve ;  
 And every day in ease and peace to dine,  
 And rest in comfort !—what a heart is mine !’—

## TALE XVIII. THE WAGER

’Tis thought your deer does hold you at a bay.  
*Taming of the Shrew, Act v, Scene 2.*

I choose her for myself :  
 If she and I are pleased, what ’s that to you ?  
*Ibid., Act v, Scene 2.*

Let’s each one send unto his wife,  
 And he whose wife is most obedient . . .  
 . . . Shall win the wager.  
*Ibid., Act v, Scene 2.*

Now by the world it is a lusty wench,  
 I love her ten times more than e’er I did.  
*Ibid., Act ii, Scene 1.*

COUNTER and CLUBB were men in trade, whose  
 pains,  
 Credit, and prudence, brought them constant  
 gains ;  
 Partners and punctual, every friend agreed  
 Counter and Clubb were men who must  
 succeed.

When they had fix’d some little time in life,  
 Each thought of taking to himself a wife :  
 As men in trade alike, as men in love  
 They seem’d with no according views to move ;  
 As certain ores in outward view the same,  
 They show’d their difference when the magnet  
 came.

Counter was vain : with spirit strong and high,  
 ’Twas not in him like suppliant swain to sigh :  
 ‘ His wife might o’er his men and maids  
 preside,

And in her province be a judge and guide ;  
 But what he thought, or did, or wish’d to do,  
 She must not know, or censure if she knew ;  
 At home, abroad, by day, by night, if he  
 On ought determined, so it was to be :  
 How is a man,’ he ask’d, ‘ for business fit,  
 Who to a female can his will submit ?  
 Absent awhile, let no inquiring eye  
 Or plainer speech presume to question why :

But all be silent ; and, when seen again,  
 Let all be cheerful—shall a wife complain ?  
 Friends I invite, and who shall dare t’ object,  
 Or look on them with coolness or neglect ?  
 No ! I must ever of my house be head,  
 And, thus obey’d, I condescend to wed.’

Clubb heard the speech—‘ My friend is  
 nice,’ said he ;

‘ A wife with less respect will do for me :  
 How is he certain such a prize to gain ?  
 What he approves, a lass may learn to feign,  
 And so affect t’ obey till she begins to reign ;  
 Awhile complying, she may vary then,  
 And be as wives of more unwary men ;  
 Beside, to him who plays such lordly part,  
 How shall a tender creature yield her heart ?  
 Should he the promised confidence refuse,  
 She may another more confiding choose ;  
 May show her anger, yet her purpose hide,  
 And wake his jealousy, and wound his pride.  
 In one so humbled, who can trace the friend ?  
 I on an equal, not a slave, depend ;  
 If true, my confidence is wisely placed,  
 And being false, she only is disgraced.’

Clubb, with these notions, cast his eye  
 around,

And one so easy soon a partner found.

The lady chosen was of good repute ;  
 Meekness she had not, and was seldom mute ;  
 Though quick to anger, still she loved to  
 smile ;

And would be calm if men would wait awhile :  
 She knew her duty, and she loved her way,  
 More pleased in truth to govern than obey ;  
 She heard her priest with reverence, and her  
 spouse

As one who felt the pressure of her vows :  
 Useful and civil, all her friends confess’d—  
 Give her her way, and she would choose the  
 best ;

Though some indeed a sly remark would make—

Give it her not, and she would choose to take.

All this, when Clubb some cheerful months had spent,

He saw, confess'd, and said he was content.

Counter meantime selected, doubted, weigh'd,

And then brought home a young complying maid ;—

A tender creature, full of fears as charms,

A beauteous nursling from its mother's arms ;

A soft, sweet blossom, such as men must love,

But to preserve must keep it in the stove :

She had a mild, subdued, expiring look—

Raise but the voice, and this fair creature shook ;

Leave her alone, she felt a thousand fears—

Chide, and she melted into floods of tears ;

Fondly she pleaded and would gently sigh,

For very pity, or she knew not why ;

One whom to govern none could be afraid—

Hold up the finger, this meek thing obey'd ;

Her happy husband had the easiest task—

Say but his will, no question would she ask ;

She sought no reasons, no affairs she knew,

Of business spoke not, and had nought to do.

Off he exclaim'd, ' How meek ! how mild !  
how kind !

With her 'twere cruel but to seem unkind ;

Though ever silent when I take my leave,

It pains my heart to think how hers will grieve ;

'Tis heaven on earth with such a wife to dwell,

I am in raptures to have sped so well ;

But let me not, my friend, your envy raise,

No ! on my life, your patience has my praise.'

His friend, though silent, felt the scorn implied—

' What need of patience ? ' to himself he cried :

' Better a woman o'er her house to rule,

Than a poor child just hurried from her school ;

Who has no care, yet never lives at ease ;

Unfit to rule, and indisposed to please ;

What if he govern, there his boast should end,

No husband's power can make a slave his friend.'

It was the custom of these friends to meet  
With a few neighbours in a neighbouring street ;

Where Counter oft-times would occasion seize,  
To move his silent friend by words like these :

' A man,' said he, ' if govern'd by his wife,

Gives up his rank and dignity in life ;

Now better fate befalls my friend and me'—

He spoke, and look'd th' approving smile to see.

The quiet partner, when he chose to speak,  
Desired his friend, ' another theme to seek ;

When thus they met, he judged that state-affairs

And such important subjects should be theirs :'

But still the partner, in his lighter vein,

Would cause in Clubb affliction or disdain ;

It made him anxious to detect the cause

Of all that boasting—' Wants my friend  
applause ?

This plainly proves him not at perfect ease,

For, felt he pleasure, he would wish to please.—

These triumphs here for some regrets atone—

Men who are blest let other men alone.'

Thus made suspicious, he observed and saw

His friend each night at early hour withdraw ;

He sometimes mention'd Juliet's tender nerves,

And what attention such a wife deserves :

' In this,' thought Clubb, ' full sure some  
mystery lies—

He laughs at me, yet he with much complies,

And all his vaunts of bliss are proud apologies.'

With such ideas treasured in his breast,

He grew composed, and let his anger rest ;

Till Counter once (when wine so long went round

That friendship and discretion both were drown'd)

Began in teasing and triumphant mood

His evening banter—' Of all earthly good,

The best,' he said, ' was an obedient spouse,

Such as my friend's—that every one allows :

What if she wishes his designs to know ?

It is because she would her praise bestow ;

What if she wills that he remains at home ?

She knows that mischief may from travel come.

I, who am free to venture where I please,

Have no such kind preventing checks as these ;

But mine is double duty, first to guide

Myself aright, then rule a house beside ;

While this our friend, more happy than the free,

Resigns all power, and laughs at liberty.'

'By Heaven,' said Clubb, 'excuse me if I swear,

I'll bet a hundred guineas, if he dare,  
That uncontroll'd I will such freedoms take,  
That he will fear to equal—there's my stake.'

'A match!' said Counter, much by wine  
inflamed;

'But we are friends—let smaller stake be  
named:

Wine for our future meeting, that will I  
Take and no more—what peril shall we try?'

'Let's to Newmarket,' Clubb replied; 'or  
choose

Yourself the place, and what you like to lose;  
And he who first returns, or fears to go,  
Forfeits his cash—' Said Counter, 'Beit so.'

The friends around them saw with much  
delight

The social war, and hail'd the pleasant night;  
Nor would they further hear the cause dis-  
cuss'd,

Afraid the recreant heart of Clubb to trust.

Now sober thoughts return'd as each with-  
drew,

And of the subject took a serious view;

'Twas wrong,' thought Counter, 'and will  
grieve my love;'

'Twas wrong,' thought Clubb, 'my wife will  
not approve;

But friends were present; I must try the  
thing,

Or with my folly half the town will ring.'

He sought his lady—'Madam, I'm to blame,  
But was reproach'd, and could not bear the  
shame;

Here in my folly—for 'tis best to say

The very truth—I've sworn to have my way:  
To that Newmarket—(though I hate the place,

And have no taste or talents for a race,  
Yet so it is—well, now prepare to chide)—

I laid a wager that I dared to ride;

And I must go: by Heaven, if you resist  
I shall be scorn'd, and ridiculed, and hiss'd;

Let me with grace before my friends appear,  
You know the truth, and must not be severe;

He too must go, but that he will of course;  
Do you consent?—I never think of force.'

'You never need,' the worthy dame replied;  
'The husband's honour is the woman's pride;

If I in trifles be the wilful wife,

Still for your credit I would lose my life;

Go! and when fix'd the day of your return,  
Stay longer yet, and let the blockheads learn,

That though a wife may sometimes wish to rule,  
She would not make th' indulgent man a fool;  
I would at times advise—but idle they  
Who think th' assenting husband *must* obey.'

The happy man, who thought his lady right  
In other cases, was assured to-night;  
Then for the day with proud delight prepared,  
To show his doubting friends how much he  
dared.

Counter—who grieving sought his bed, his  
rest

Broken by pictures of his love distress'd—  
With soft and winning speech the fair pre-  
pared;

'She all his councils, comforts, pleasures  
shared:

She was assured he loved her from his soul,  
She never knew and need not fear control;  
But so it happen'd—he was grieved at heart,  
It happen'd so, that they awhile must part—  
A little time—the distance was but short,  
And business call'd him—he despised the  
sport;

But to Newmarket he engaged to ride,  
With his friend Clubb, and there he stopp'd  
and sigh'd.

Awhile the tender creature look'd dismay'd,  
Then floods of tears the call of grief obey'd:—

'She an objection! No!' she sobb'd,  
'not one;

Her work was finish'd, and her race was run;  
For die she must, indeed she would not live  
A week alone, for all the world could give;  
He too must die in that same wicked place;  
It always happen'd—was a common case;  
Among those horrid horses, jockeys, crowds,  
'Twas certain death—they might bespeak  
their shrouds;

He would attempt a race, be sure to fall—  
And she expire with terror—that was all;  
With love like hers she was indeed unfit  
To bear such horrors, but she must submit.'

'But for three days, my love! three days  
at most—'

'Enough for me; I then shall be a ghost—'  
'My honour's pledged!—' 'Oh! yes, my  
dearest life,

I know your honour must outweigh your wife;  
But ere this absence, have you sought a friend?  
I shall be dead—on whom can you depend?—  
Let me one favour of your kindness crave,  
Grant me the stone I mention'd for my  
grave.—'

'Nay, love, attend—why, bless my soul—  
 I say  
 I will return—there—weep no longer—  
 nay!—'  
 'Well! I obey, and to the last am true,  
 But spirits fail me; I must die; adieu!'  
 'What, madam! must?—'tis wrong—I'm  
 angry—zounds!  
 Can I remain and lose a thousand pounds?'  
 'Go then, my love! it is a monstrous sum,  
 Worth twenty wives—go, love! and I am  
 dumb—  
 Nor be displeased—had I the power to live,  
 You might be angry, now you must forgive;  
 Alas! I faint—ah! cruel—there's no need  
 Of wounds or fevers—this has done the deed.'  
 The lady fainted, and the husband sent  
 For every aid, for every comfort went;  
 Strong terror seized him; 'Oh! she loved  
 so well,  
 And who th' effect of tenderness could tell?'  
 She now recover'd, and again began  
 With accent querulous—'Ah! cruel man—'  
 Till the sad husband, conscience-struck,  
 confess'd,  
 'Twas very wicked with his friend to jest;  
 For now he saw that those who were obey'd,  
 Could like the most subservient feel afraid;  
 And though a wife might not dispute the will  
 Of her liege lord, she could prevent it still.  
 The morning came, and Clubb prepared to  
 ride  
 With a smart boy, his servant and his guide;  
 When, ere he mounted on the ready steed,  
 Arrived a letter, and he stopp'd to read.  
 'My friend,' he read—'our journey I  
 decline,  
 A heart too tender for such strife is mine;  
 Yours is the triumph, be you so inclined;  
 But you are too considerate and kind:  
 In tender pity to my Juliet's fears  
 I thus relent, o'ercome by love and tears;  
 She knows your kindness; I have heard her  
 say,  
 A man like you 'tis pleasure to obey:

Each faithful wife, like ours, must disapprove  
 Such dangerous trifling with connubial love;  
 What has the idle world, my friend, to do  
 With our affairs? they envy me and you:  
 What if I could my gentle spouse command—  
 Is that a cause I should her tears withstand?  
 And what if you, a friend of peace, submit  
 To one you love—is that a theme for wit?  
 'Twas wrong, and I shall henceforth judge it  
 weak  
 Both of submission and control to speak:  
 Be it agreed that all contention cease,  
 And no such follies vex our future peace;  
 Let each keep guard against domestic strife,  
 And find nor slave nor tyrant in his wife.'  
 'Agreed,' said Clubb, 'with all my soul  
 agreed—'  
 And to the boy, delighted, gave his steed;  
 'I think my friend has well his mind express'd,  
 And I assent; such things are not a jest.'  
 'True,' said the wife, 'no longer he can hide  
 The truth that pains him by his wounded  
 pride:  
 Your friend has found it not an easy thing,  
 Beneath his yoke, this yielding soul to bring;  
 These weeping willows, though they seem  
 inclined  
 By every breeze, yet not the strongest wind  
 Can from their bent divert this weak but  
 stubborn kind;  
 Drooping they seek your pity to excite,  
 But 'tis at once their nature and delight;  
 Such women feel not; while they sigh and  
 weep,  
 'Tis but their habit—their affections sleep;  
 They are like ice that in the hand we hold,  
 So very melting, yet so very cold;  
 On such affection let not man rely,  
 The husbands suffer, and the ladies sigh:  
 But your friend's offer let us kindly take,  
 And spare his pride for his vexation's sake;  
 For he has found, and through his life will find,  
 'Tis easiest dealing with the firmest mind—  
 More just when it resists, and, when it yields,  
 more kind.'

## TALE XIX. THE CONVERT

A tapster is a good trade, an old cloak makes a new jerkin ; a wither'd serving-man, a fresh tapster.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act i, Scene 3.

A fellow, sir, that I have known go about with troll-my-dames.

*Winter's Tale*, Act iv, Scene 2.

I myself, sometimes leaving the fear of God on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act ii, Scene 2.

Yea, at that very moment, Consideration like an angel came, And whipp'd the offending Adam out of him.

*Henry V*, Act i, Scene 1.

I have liv'd long enough : My May of life Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf ; And that which should accompany old age, As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, I must not look to have.

*Macbeth*, Act v, Scene 3.

SOME to our hero have a hero's name Denied, because no father's he could claim ; Nor could his mother with precision state A full fair claim to her certificate ; On her own word the marriage must depend—A point she was not eager to defend : But who, without a father's name, can raise His own so high, deserves the greater praise : The less advantage to the strife he brought, The greater wonders has his prowess wrought ; He who depends upon his wind and limbs, Needs neither cork or bladder when he swims ; Nor will by empty breath be puff'd along, As not himself—but in his helpers—strong.

Suffice it then, our hero's name was clear, For, call John Dighton, and he answer'd, ' Here ! '

But who that name in early life assign'd He never found, he never tried to find ; Whether his kindred were to John disgrace, Or John to them, is a disputed case ; His infant-state owed nothing to their care—His mind neglected, and his body bare ; All his success must on himself depend, He had no money, counsel, guide, or friend ; But in a market-town an active boy Appear'd, and sought in various ways employ ;

Who soon, thus cast upon the world, began To show the talents of a thriving man.

With spirit high John learn'd the world to brave,

And in both senses was a ready knave ; Knave as of old, obedient, keen, and quick, Knave as at present, skill'd to shift and trick ; Some humble part of many trades he caught, He for the builder and the painter wrought ; For serving-maids on secret errands ran, The waiter's helper, and the hostler's man ; And when he chanced (oft chanced he) place to lose,

His varying genius shone in blacking shoes : A midnight fisher by the pond he stood, Assistant poacher, he o'erlook'd the wood ; At an election John's impartial mind Was to no cause nor candidate confined ; To all in turn he full allegiance swore, And in his hat the various badges bore : His liberal soul with every sect agreed, Unheard their reasons, he received their creed ; At church he deign'd the organ-pipes to fill, And at the meeting sang both loud and shrill : But the full purse these different merits gain'd, By strong demands his lively passions drain'd ; Liquors he loved of each inflaming kind, To midnight revels flew with ardent mind ; Too warm at cards, a losing game he play'd, To fleecing beauty his attention paid ; His boiling passions were by oaths express'd, And lies he made his profit and his jest.

Such was the boy, and such the man had been,

But fate or happier fortune changed the scene ; A fever seized him, ' He should surely die—' He fear'd, and lo ! a friend was praying by ; With terror moved, this teacher he address'd, And all the errors of his youth confess'd :

The good man kindly clear'd the sinner's way

To lively hope, and counsell'd him to pray ; Who then resolved, should he from sickness rise,

To quit cards, liquors, poaching, oaths, and lies :

His health restored, he yet resolved, and grew True to his masters, to their meeting true ; His old companions at his sober face Laugh'd loud, while he, attesting it was grace,

With tears besought them all his calling to  
embrace :

To his new friends such convert gave applause,  
Life to their zeal, and glory to their cause :  
Though terror wrought the mighty change,  
yet strong

Was the impression, and it lasted long ;  
John at the lectures due attendance paid,  
A convert meek, obedient, and afraid.

His manners strict, though form'd on fear  
alone,

Pleased the grave friends, nor less his solemn  
tone,

The lengthen'd face of care, the low and  
inward groan :

The stern good men exulted, when they saw  
Those timid looks of penitence and awe ;  
Nor thought that one so passive, humble,  
meek,

Had yet a creed and principles to seek.

The faith that reason finds, confirms, avows,  
The hopes, the views, the comforts he allows—  
These were not his, who by his feelings found,  
And by them only, that his faith was sound ;  
Feelings of terror these, for evil past,  
Feelings of hope, to be received at last ;  
Now weak, now lively, changing with the  
day,

These were his feelings, and he felt his way.  
Sprung from such sources, will this faith  
remain

While these supporters can their strength  
retain :

As heaviest weights the deepest rivers pass,  
While icy chains fast bind the solid mass ;  
So, born of feelings, faith remains secure,  
Long as their firmness and their strength  
endure :

But when the waters in their channel glide,  
A bridge must bear us o'er the threat'ning  
tide ;

Such bridge is reason, and there faith relies,  
Whether the varying spirits fall or rise.

His patrons, still disposed their aid to lend,  
Behind a counter placed their humble friend ;  
Where pens and paper were on shelves  
display'd,

And pious pamphlets on the windows laid :  
By nature active, and from vice restrain'd,  
Increasing trade his bolder views sustain'd ;  
His friends and teachers, finding so much zeal  
In that young convert whom they taught to  
feel,

His trade encouraged, and were pleased to find  
A hand so ready, with such humble mind.

And now, his health restored, his spirits  
eased,

He wish'd to marry, if the teachers pleased.  
They, not unwilling, from the virgin-class  
Took him a comely and a courteous lass ;  
Simple and civil, loving and beloved,  
She long a fond and faithful partner proved ;  
In every year the elders and the priest  
Were duly summon'd to a christening feast ;  
Nor came a babe, but by his growing trade,  
John had provision for the coming made ;  
For friends and strangers all were pleased to  
deal

With one whose care was equal to his zeal.

In human friendships, it compels a sigh,  
To think what trifles will dissolve the tie.  
John, now become a master of his trade,  
Perceived how much improvement might be  
made ;

And as this prospect open'd to his view,  
A certain portion of his zeal withdrew ;  
His fear abated—' What had he to fear—  
His profits certain, and his conscience clear ? '  
Above his door a board was placed by John,  
And ' Dighton, stationer,' was gilt thereon ;  
His window next, enlarged to twice the size,  
Shone with such trinkets as the simple prize ;  
While in the shop with pious works were seen  
The last new play, review, or magazine :  
In orders punctual, he observed—' The books  
He never read, and could he judge their looks ?  
Readers and critics should their merits try,  
He had no office but to sell and buy ;  
Like other traders, profit was his care ;  
Of what they print, the authors must beware.'  
He held his patrons and his teachers dear,  
But with his trade—they must not interfere.

'Twas certain now that John had lost the  
dread

And pious thoughts that once such terrors  
bred ;

His habits varied, and he more inclined  
To the vain world, which he had half resign'd :  
He had moreover in his brethren seen,  
Or he imagined, craft, conceit, and spleen ;  
' They are but men,' said John, ' and shall

I then  
Fear man's control, or stand in awe of men ?  
'Tis their advice (their convert's rule and  
law),  
And good it is—I will not stand in awe.'

Moreover Dighton, though he thought of books

As one who chiefly on the title looks,  
Yet sometimes ponder'd o'er a page to find,  
When vex'd with cares, amusement for his mind ;

And by degrees that mind had treasured much  
From works his teachers were afraid to touch :  
Satiric novels, poets bold and free,  
And what their writers term philosophy ;  
All these were read, and he began to feel  
Some self-approval on his bosom steal.  
Wisdom creates humility, but he  
Who thus collects it, will not humble be :  
No longer John was fill'd with pure delight  
And humble reverence in a pastor's sight ;  
Who, like a grateful zealot, listening stood,  
To hear a man so friendly and so good ;  
But felt the dignity of one who made  
Himself important by a thriving trade ;  
And growing pride in Dighton's mind was bred  
By the strange food on which it coarsely fed.

Their brother's fall the grieving brethren heard,

The pride indeed to all around appear'd ;  
The world his friends agreed had won the soul  
From its best hopes, the man from their control :

To make him humble, and confine his views  
Within their bounds, and books which they peruse ;

A deputation from these friends select,  
Might reason with him to some good effect ;  
Arm'd with authority, and led by love,  
They might those follies from his mind remove ;

Deciding thus, and with this kind intent,  
A chosen body with its speaker went.

' John,' said the teacher, ' John,' with great concern,

' We see thy frailty, and thy fate discern—  
Satan with toils thy simple soul beset,  
And thou art careless, slumbering in the net ;  
Unmindful art thou of thy early vow ;  
Who at the morning-meeting sees thee now ?  
Who at the evening ? where is brother John ?  
We ask—are answer'd, To the tavern gone :  
Thee on the sabbath seldom we behold ;  
Thou canst not sing, thou'rt nursing for a cold :

This from the churchmen thou hast learn'd,  
for they

Have colds and fevers on the sabbath-day ;

When in some snug warm room they sit, and pen

Bills from their ledgers, (world-entangled men !)

' See with what pride thou hast enlarged thy shop ;

To view thy tempting stores the heedless stop ;

By what strange names dost thou these baubles know,

Which wantons wear, to make a sinful show ?  
Hast thou in view these idle volumes placed  
To be the pander of a vicious taste ?

What's here ? a book of dances !—you advance

In goodly knowledge—John, wilt learn to dance ?

How ! " Go—" it says, and " to the devil go !  
And shake thyself !" I tremble—but 'tis so—

Wretch as thou art, what answer canst thou make ?

Oh ! without question, thou wilt go and shake.  
What's here ? the " School for Scandal"—pretty schools !

Well, and art thou proficient in the rules ?  
Art thou a pupil, is it thy design

To make our names contemptible as thine ?  
" Old Nick, a Novel !" oh ! 'tis mighty well—  
A fool has courage when he laughs at hell ;  
" Frolic and Fun," the humours of " Tim Grin ;"

Why, John, thou grow'st facetious in thy sin ;  
And what ? " The Archdeacon's Charge"—'tis mighty well—

If Satan publish'd, thou wouldst doubtless sell ;

Jests, novels, dances, and this precious stuff,  
To crown thy folly we have seen enough ;

We find thee fitted for each evil work—  
Do print the Koran, and become a Turk.

' John, thou art lost ; success and worldly pride

O'er all thy thoughts and purposes preside,  
Have bound thee fast, and drawn thee far aside :

Yet turn ; these sin-traps from thy shop expel,  
Repent and pray, and all may yet be well.

' And here thy wife, thy Dorothy, behold,  
How fashion's wanton robes her form in fold !  
Can grace, can goodness with such trappings dwell ?

John, thou hast made thy wife a Jezebel :



See! on her bosom rests the sign of sin,  
The glaring proof of naughty thoughts within;  
What? 'tis a cross; come hither—as a friend,  
Thus from thy neck the shameful badge I rend.

'Rend, if you dare,' said Dighton; 'you shall find

A man of spirit, though to peace inclined;  
Call me ungrateful! have I not my pay  
At all times ready for the expected day?—  
To share my plenteous board you deign to come,

Myself your pupil, and my house your home;  
And shall the persons who my meat enjoy  
Talk of my faults, and treat me as a boy?  
Have you not told how Rome's insulting priests

Led their meek laymen like a herd of beasts;  
And by their fleecing and their forgery made  
Their holy calling an accursed trade?

Can you such acts and insolence condemn,  
Who to your utmost power resemble them?

'Concerns it you what books I set for sale?  
The tale perchance may be a virtuous tale;  
And for the rest, 'tis neither wise nor just,  
In you, who read not, to condemn on trust;  
Why should th' Archdeacon's Charge your spleen excite?

He, or perchance th' archbishop, may be right.

'That from your meetings I refrain, is true;  
I meet with nothing pleasant—nothing new;  
But the same proofs, that not one text explain,  
And the same lights, where all things dark remain;

I thought you saints on earth—but I have found

Some sins among you, and the best unsound;  
You have your failings, like the crowds below,  
And at your pleasure hot and cold can blow:  
When I at first your grave deportment saw,  
(I own my folly,) I was fill'd with awe;  
You spoke so warmly, and it seems so well,  
I should have thought it treason to rebel;  
Is it a wonder that a man like me  
Should such perfection in such teachers see;  
Nay, should conceive you sent from Heav'n to brave

The host of sin, and sinful souls to save?  
But as our reason wakes, our prospects clear,  
And failings, flaws, and blemishes appear.

'When you were mounted in your rostrum high,

We shrank beneath your tone, your frown,  
your eye;

Then you beheld us abject, fallen, low,  
And felt your glory from our baseness grow;  
Touch'd by your words, I trembled like the rest,

And my own vileness and your power confess'd:

These, I exclaim'd, are men divine, and gazed  
On him who taught, delighted and amazed;  
Glad when he finish'd, if by chance he cast  
One look on such a sinner, as he pass'd.

'But when I view'd you in a clearer light,  
And saw the frail and carnal appetite;  
When, at his humble pray'r, you deign'd to eat,

Saints as you are, a civil sinner's meat;  
When as you sat contented and at ease,  
Nibbling at leisure on the ducks and peas,  
And, pleas'd some comforts in such place to find,

You could descend to be a little kind;  
And gave us hope, in Heaven there might be room

For a few souls beside your own to come;  
While this world's good engaged your carnal view,

And like a sinner you enjoy'd it too;  
All this perceiving, can you think it strange  
That change in you should work an equal change?

'Wretch that thou art,' an elder cried,  
'and gone

For everlasting.'—'Go thyself,' said John;  
'Depart this instant, let me hear no more;

My house my castle is, and that my door.'

The hint they took, and from the door withdrew,

And John to meeting bade a long adieu;  
Attach'd to business, he in time became

A wealthy man of no inferior name.  
It seem'd, alas! in John's deluded sight,  
That all was wrong because not all was right;  
And when he found his teachers had their stains,

Resentment and not reason broke his chains:  
Thus on his feelings he again relied,  
And never look'd to reason for his guide:

Could he have wisely view'd the frailty shown,  
And rightly weigh'd their wanderings and his own,

He might have known that men may be sincere,

Though gay and feasting on the savoury cheer;

That doctrines sound and sober they may teach,

Who love to eat with all the glee they preach ;  
Nay, who believe the duck, the grape, the pine,

Were not intended for the dog and swine :  
But Dighton's hasty mind on every theme  
Ran from the truth, and rested in th' extreme :  
Flaws in his friends he found, and then withdrew

(Vain of his knowledge) from their virtues too.  
Best of his books he loved the liberal kind,  
That, if they improve not, still enlarge the mind ;

And found himself, with such advisers, free  
From a fix'd creed, as mind enlarged could be.  
His humble wife at these opinions sigh'd,  
But her he never heeded till she died ;  
He then assented to a last request,  
And by the meeting-window let her rest ;  
And on her stone the sacred text was seen,  
Which had her comfort in departing been.

Dighton with joy beheld his trade advance,  
Yet seldom published, loth to trust to chance ;  
Then wed a doctor's sister—poor indeed,  
But skill'd in works her husband could not read ;

Who, if he wish'd new ways of wealth to seek,  
Could make her half-crown pamphlet in a week :

This he rejected, though without disdain,  
And chose the old and certain way to gain.

Thus he proceeded ; trade increased the while,

And fortune woo'd him with perpetual smile :  
On early scenes he sometimes cast a thought,  
When on his heart the mighty change was wrought ;

And all the ease and comfort converts find  
Was magnified in his reflecting mind :  
Then on the teacher's priestly pride he dwelt,  
That caused his freedom, but with this he felt

The danger of the free—for since that day,  
No guide had shown, no brethren join'd his way ;

Forsaking one, he found no second creed,  
But reading doubted, doubting what to read.

Still, though reproof had brought some present pain,

The gain he made was fair and honest gain ;  
He laid his wares indeed in public view,  
But that all traders claim a right to do :

By means like these, he saw his wealth increase,

And felt his consequence, and dwelt in peace.  
Our hero's age was threescore years and five,  
When he exclaim'd, ' Why longer should I strive ?

Why more amass, who never must behold  
A young John Dighton to make glad the old ?'  
(The sons he had to early graves were gone,  
And girls were burdens to the mind of John.)  
' Had I a boy, he would our name sustain,  
That now to nothing must return again ;  
But what are all my profits, credit, trade,  
And parish-honours ?—folly and parade.'

Thus Dighton thought, and in his looks appear'd

Sadness increased by much he saw and heard :  
The brethren often at the shop would stay,  
And make their comments ere they walk'd away :

They mark'd the window, fill'd in every pane  
With lawless prints of reputations slain ;  
Distorted forms of men with honours graced,  
And our chief rulers in derision placed :  
Amazed they stood, remembering well the days,

When to be humble was their brother's praise ;  
When at the dwelling of their friend they stopp'd

To drop a word, or to receive it dropp'd ;  
Where they beheld the prints of men renown'd,  
And far-famed preachers pasted all around ;  
(Such mouths ! eyes ! hair ! so prim ! so fierce ! so sleek !

They look'd as speaking what is wo to speak):  
On these the passing brethren loved to dwell—  
How long they spake ! how strongly ! warmly ! well !

What power had each to dive in mysteries deep,

To warm the cold, to make the harden'd weep ;  
To lure, to fright, to soothe, to awe the soul,  
And list'n'ng flocks to lead and to control !

But now discoursing, as they linger'd near,  
They tempted John (whom they accused) to hear

Their weighty charge—' And can the lost-one feel,

As in the time of duty, love, and zeal ;  
When all were summon'd at the rising sun,  
And he was ready with his friends to run ;  
When he, partaking with a chosen few,  
Felt the great change, sensation rich and new ?

No ! all is lost, her favours Fortune shower'd  
Upon the man, and he is overpower'd ;  
The world has won him with its tempting store  
Of needless wealth, and that has made him  
poor :

Success undoes him ; he has risen to fall,  
Has gain'd a fortune, and has lost his all ;  
Gone back from Sion, he will find his age  
Loth to commence a second pilgrimage ;  
He has retreated from the chosen track ;  
And now must ever bear the burden on his  
back.'

Hurt by such censure, John began to find  
Fresh revolutions working in his mind ;  
He sought for comfort in his books, but read  
Without a plan or method in his head ;  
What once amused, now rather made him sad,  
What should inform, increased the doubts he  
had ;

Shame would not let him seek at church a  
guide,

And from his meeting he was held by pride ;  
His wife derided fears she never felt,  
And passing brethren daily censures dealt ;  
Hope for a son was now for ever past,  
He was the first John Dighton, and the last ;  
His stomach fail'd, his case the doctor knew,  
But said, ' he still might hold a year or two : '  
' No more ! ' he said, ' but why should I com-  
plain ?

A life of doubt must be a life of pain :  
Could I be sure—but why should I despair ?  
I'm sure my conduct has been just and fair ;

In youth indeed I had a wicked will,  
But I repented, and have sorrow still :  
I had my comforts, and a growing trade  
Gave greater pleasure than a fortune made ;  
And as I more possess'd and reason'd more,  
I lost those comforts I enjoy'd before,  
When reverend guides I saw my table round,  
And in my guardian guest my safety found :  
Now sick and sad, no appetite, no ease,  
Nor pleasure have I, nor a wish to please ;  
Nor views, nor hopes, nor plans, nor taste  
have I,

Yet sick of life, have no desire to die.'

He said, and died ; his trade, his name is  
gone,

And all that once gave consequence to John.  
Unhappy Dighton ! had he found a friend,  
When conscience told him it was time to  
mend !

A friend discreet, considerate, kind, sincere,  
Who would have shown the grounds of hope  
and fear ;

And proved that spirits, whether high or low,  
No certain tokens of man's safety show ;  
Had reason ruled him in her proper place,  
And virtue led him while he lean'd on grace ;  
Had he while zealous been discreet and pure,  
His knowledge humble, and his hope secure ;—  
These guides had placed him on the solid rock,  
Where faith had rested, nor received a shock ;  
But his, alas ! was placed upon the sand,  
Where long it stood not, and where none can  
stand.

## TALE XX. THE BROTHERS

A brother noble,  
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,  
That he suspects none ; on whose foolish  
honesty  
My practices ride easy.

*King Lear, Act i, Scene 2.*

He lets me feed with his hinds,  
Bars me the place of a brother.

*As You Like It, Act i, Scene 1.*

'Twas I, but 'tis not I ; I do not shame  
To tell you what I was, . . . being the thing  
I am.

*As You Like It, Act iv, Scene 3.*

THAN old George Fletcher, on the British coast,  
Dwelt not a seaman who had more to boast ;

Kind, simple, and sincere—he seldom spoke,  
But sometimes sang and chorus'd—' *Hearts  
of Oak* ;'

In dangers steady, with his lot content,  
His days in labour and in love were spent.

He left a son so like him, that the old  
With joy exclaim'd, ' 'Tis Fletcher we be-  
hold ;'

But to his brother when the kinsmen came,  
And view'd his form, they grudged the  
father's name.

George was a bold, intrepid, careless lad,  
With just the failings that his father had ;  
Isaac was weak, attentive, slow, exact,  
With just the virtues that his father lack'd.

George lived at sea: upon the land a guest—  
He sought for recreation, not for rest—  
While, far unlike, his brother's feeble form  
Shrank from the cold, and shudder'd at the  
storm;

Still with the seaman's to connect his trade,  
The boy was bound where blocks and ropes  
were made.

George, strong and sturdy, had a tender  
mind,

And was to Isaac pitiful and kind;  
A very father, till his art was gain'd,  
And then a friend unwearied he remain'd:  
He saw his brother was of spirit low,  
His temper peevish, and his motions slow;  
Not fit to bustle in a world, or make  
Friends to his fortune for his merit's sake:  
But the kind sailor could not boast the art  
Of looking deeply in the human heart;  
Else had he seen that this weak brother knew  
What men to court—what objects to pursue;  
That he to distant gain the way discern'd,  
And none so crooked but his genius learn'd.

Isaac was poor, and this the brother felt;  
He hired a house, and there the landman  
dwelt;

Wrought at his trade, and had an easy home,  
For there would George with cash and com-  
forts come;

And when they parted, Isaac look'd around,  
Where other friends and helpers might be  
found.

He wish'd for some port-place, and one  
might fall,

He wisely thought, if he should try for all;  
He had a vote—and, were it well applied,  
Might have its worth—and he had views  
beside;

Old Burgess Steel was able to promote  
An humble man who served him with a  
vote;

For Isaac felt not what some tempers feel,  
But bow'd and bent the neck to Burgess Steel;  
And great attention to a lady gave,  
His ancient friend, a maiden spare and grave:  
One whom the visage long and look demure  
Of Isaac pleased—he seem'd sedate and pure;  
And his soft heart conceived a gentle flame  
For her who waited on this virtuous dame:  
Not an outrageous love, a scorching fire,  
But friendly liking and chastised desire;  
And thus he waited, patient in delay,  
In present favour and in fortune's way.

George then was coasting—war was yet  
delay'd,

And what he gain'd was to his brother paid;  
Nor ask'd the seaman what he saved or spent:  
But took his grog, wrought hard, and was  
content;

Till war awak'd the land, and George began  
To think what part became a useful man:

'Press'd, I must go; why, then, 'tis better far  
At once to enter like a British tar,  
Than a brave captain and the foe to shun,  
As if I fear'd the music of a gun.'

'Go not!' said Isaac—'You shall wear  
disguise.'

'What!' said the seaman, 'clothe myself  
with lies?'—

'Oh! but there's danger.'—'Danger in the  
fleet?

You cannot mean, good brother, of defeat;  
And other dangers I at land must share—  
So now adieu! and trust a brother's care.'

Isaac awhile demurr'd—but, in his heart,  
So might he share, he was disposed to part:  
The better mind will sometimes feel the pain  
Of benefactions—favour is a chain;  
But they the feeling scorn, and what they  
wish, disdain;—

While beings form'd in coarser mould will hate  
The helping hand they ought to venerate;  
No wonder George should in this cause prevail,  
With one contending who was glad to fail:

'Isaac, farewell! do wipe that doleful eye;  
Crying we came, and groaning we may die.  
Let us do something 'twixt the groan and cry:  
And hear me, brother, whether pay or prize,  
One half to thee I give and I devise;  
For thou hast oft occasion for the aid  
Of learn'd physicians, and they will be paid:  
Their wives and children men support, at sea,  
And thou, my lad, art wife and child to me:  
Farewell!—I go where hope and honour call,  
Nor does it follow that who fights must fall.'

Isaac here made a poor attempt to speak,  
And a huge tear moved slowly down his cheek;  
Like Pluto's iron drop, hard sign of grace,  
It slowly roll'd upon the rueful face,  
Forced by the striving will alone its way to  
trace.

Years fled—war lasted—George at sea  
remain'd,

While the slow landman still his profits gain'd:  
A humble place was vacant—he besought  
His patron's interest, and the office caught;

For still the virgin was his faithful friend,  
And one so sober could with truth commend,  
Who of his own defects most humbly thought,  
And their advice with zeal and reverence  
sought :

Whom thus the mistress praised, the maid  
approved,

And her he wedded whom he wisely loved.

No more he needs assistance—but, alas !  
He fears the money will for liquor pass ;  
Or that the seaman might to flatterers lend,  
Or give support to some pretended friend :  
Still he must write—he wrote, and he confess'd  
That, till absolved, he should be sore dis-  
tress'd ;

But one so friendly would, he thought, forgive  
The hasty deed—Heav'n knew how he should  
live ;

' But you,' he added, ' as a man of sense,  
Have well consider'd danger and expense :  
I ran, alas ! into the fatal snare,  
And now for trouble must my mind prepare ;  
And how, with children, I shall pick my way,  
Through a hard world, is more than I can say :  
Then change not, brother, your more happy  
state,

Or on the hazard long deliberate.'

George answer'd gravely, ' It is right and fit,  
In all our crosses, humbly to submit :  
Your apprehensions are unwise, unjust ;  
Forbear repining, and expel distrust.'

He added, ' Marriage was the joy of life,'  
And gave his service to his brother's wife ;  
Then vow'd to bear in all expense a part,  
And thus concluded, ' Have a cheerful heart.'  
Had the glad Isaac been his brother's guide,  
In these same terms the seaman had replied ;  
At such reproofs the crafty landman smiled,  
And softly said—' This creature is a child.'

Twice had the gallantship a capture made—  
And when in port the happy crew were paid,  
Home went the sailor, with his pocket stored,  
Ease to enjoy, and pleasure to afford ;  
His time was short, joy shone in every face,  
Isaac half fainted in the fond embrace :  
The wife resolved her honour'd guest to please,  
The children clung upon their uncle's knees ;  
The grog went round, the neighbours drank  
his health,

And George exclaim'd—' Ah ! what to this  
is wealth ?

Better,' said he, ' to bear a loving heart,  
Than roll in riches—but we now must part !'

All yet is still—but hark ! the winds  
o'ersweep

The rising waves, and howl upon the deep ;  
Ships late becalm'd on mountain-billows  
ride—

So life is threaten'd, and so man is tried.

Ill were the tidings that arrived from sea,  
The worthy George must now a cripple be ;  
His leg was lopp'd ; and though his heart  
was sound,

Though his brave captain was with glory  
crown'd—

Yet much it vex'd him to repose on shore,  
An idle log, and be of use no more :  
True, he was sure that Isaac would receive  
All of his brother that the foe might leave ;  
To whom the seaman his design had sent,  
Ere from the port the wounded hero went :  
His wealth and expectations told, he ' knew  
Wherein they fail'd, what Isaac's love would  
do ;

That he the grog and cabin would supply,  
Where George at anchor during life would lie.'

The landman read—and, reading, grew  
distress'd :—

' Could he resolve t' admit so poor a guest ?  
Better at Greenwich might the sailor stay,  
Unless his purse could for his comforts pay ;'  
So Isaac judged, and to his wife appeal'd,  
But yet acknowledged it was best to yield :  
' Perhaps his pension, with what sums remain  
Due or unsquander'd, may the man main-  
tain ;

Refuse we must not.'—With a heavy sigh  
The lady heard, and made her kind reply :—  
' Nor would I wish it, Isaac, were we sure  
How long his crazy building will endure ;  
Like an old house, that every day appears  
About to fall—he may be propp'd for years ;  
For a few months, indeed, we might comply,  
But these old batter'd fellows never die.'

The hand of Isaac, George on entering took,  
With love and resignation in his look ;  
Declared his comfort in the fortune past,  
And joy to find his anchor safely cast ;

' Call then my nephews, let the grog be  
brought,

And I will tell them how the ship was fought.'

Alas ! our simple seaman should have  
known,

That all the care, the kindness, he had shown,  
Were from his brother's heart, if not his  
memory, down :

All swept away to be perceived no more,  
Like idle structures on the sandy shore;  
The chance amusement of the playful boy,  
That the rude billows in their rage destroy.

Poor George confess'd, though loth the  
truth to find,

Slight was his knowledge of a brother's mind :  
The vulgar pipe was to the wife offence,  
The frequent grog to Isaac an expense ;  
Would friends like hers, she question'd,  
'choose to come,

Where clouds of poison'd fume defiled a room?  
This could their lady-friend, and Burgess  
Steel,

(Teased with his worship's asthma,) bear to  
feel ?

Could they associate or converse with him—  
A loud rough sailor with a timber limb ?'

Cold as he grew, still Isaac strove to show,  
By well-feign'd care, that cold he could not  
grow ;

And when he saw his brother look distress'd,  
He strove some petty comforts to suggest ;  
On his wife solely their neglect to lay,  
And then t' excuse it, as a woman's way ;  
He too was chidden when her rules he broke,  
And then she sicken'd at the scent of smoke.

George, though in doubt, was still consoled  
to find

His brother wishing to be reckon'd kind :  
That Isaac seem'd concern'd by his distress,  
Gave to his injured feelings some redress ;  
But none he found disposed to lend an ear  
To stories, all were once intent to hear :  
Except his nephew, seated on his knee,  
He found no creature cared about the sea ;  
But George indeed—for George they call'd  
the boy,

When his good uncle was their boast and  
joy—

Would listen long, and would contend with  
sleep.

To hear the woes and wonders of the deep ;  
Till the fond mother cried—' That man will  
teach

The foolish boy his loud and boisterous  
speech.'

So judged the father—and the boy was taught  
To shun the uncle, whom his love had sought.

The mask of kindness now but seldom worn,  
George felt each evil harder to be borne ;  
And cried (vexation growing day by day),  
'Ah! brother Isaac!—What! I'm in the way!'

'No! on my credit, look ye, No! but I  
Am fond of peace, and my repose would buy  
On any terms—in short, we must comply :  
My spouse had money—she must have her  
will—

Ah! brother—marriage is a bitter pill.'

George tried the lady—' Sister, I offend.'  
'Me?' she replied—' Oh no!—you may  
depend

On my regard—but watch your brother's way,  
Whom I, like you, must study and obey.'

' Ah!' thought the seaman, ' what a head  
was mine,

That easy berth at Greenwich to resign!  
I'll to the parish'—but a little pride,  
And some affection, put the thought aside.

Now gross neglect and open scorn he bore  
In silent sorrow—but he felt the more :  
The odious pipe he to the kitchen took,  
Or strove to profit by some pious book.

When the mind stoops to this degraded  
state,

New griefs will darken the dependent's fate ;  
' Brother!' said Isaac, ' you will sure excuse  
The little freedom I'm compell'd to use :  
My wife's relations—(curse the haughty  
crew)—

Affect such niceness, and such dread of you :  
You speak so loud—and they have natures  
soft—

Brother—I wish—do go upon the loft !'

Poor George obey'd, and to the garret fled,  
Where not a being saw the tears he shed :  
But more was yet required, for guests were  
come,

Who could not dine if he disgraced the room.  
It shock'd his spirit to be esteem'd unfit  
With an own brother and his wife to sit ;  
He grew rebellious—at the vestry spoke  
For weekly aid—they heard it as a joke :  
' So kind a brother, and so wealthy—you  
Apply to us ?—No! this will never do :  
Good neighbour Fletcher,' said the overseer,  
' We are engaged—you can have nothing here!'

George mutter'd something in despairing  
tone,

Then sought his loft, to think and grieve  
alone ;

Neglected, slighted, restless on his bed,  
With heart half broken, and with scraps ill fed ;  
Yet was he pleased, that hours for play  
design'd

Were given to ease his ever-troubled mind ;

The child still listen'd with increasing joy,  
And he was soothed by the attentive boy.

At length he sicken'd, and this duteous child  
Watch'd o'er his sickness, and his pains  
beguiled ;

The mother bade him from the loft refrain,  
But, though with caution, yet he went again ;  
And now his tales the sailor feebly told,  
His heart was heavy, and his limbs were cold :  
The tender boy came often to entreat  
His good kind friend would of his presents  
eat ;

Purloin'd or purchased, for he saw, with  
shame,

The food untouch'd that to his uncle came ;  
Who, sick in body and in mind, received  
The boy's indulgence, gratified and grieved.

'Uncle will die !' said George—the piteous  
wife

Exclaim'd, ' she saw no value in his life ;  
But sick or well, to my commands attend,  
And go no more to your complaining friend.'  
The boy was vex'd, he felt his heart reprove  
The stern decree.—What ! punish'd for his  
love !

No ! he would go, but softly to the room,  
Stealing in silence—for he knew his doom.

Once in a week the father came to say,  
' George, are you ill ?'—and hurried him  
away ;

Yet to his wife would on their duties dwell,  
And often cry, ' Do use my brother well :'  
And something kind, no question, Isaac  
meant,

Who took vast credit for the vague intent.

But truly kind, the gentle boy essay'd  
To cheer his uncle, firm, although afraid ;  
But now the father caught him at the door,  
And, swearing—yes, the man in office swore,  
And cried, ' Away ! How ! Brother, I'm  
surprised,

That one so old can be so ill advised :  
Let him not dare to visit you again,  
Your cursed stories will disturb his brain ;  
Is it not vile to court a foolish boy,  
Your own absurd narrations to enjoy ?  
What ! sullen !—ha ! George Fletcher ! you  
shall see,

Proud as you are, your bread depends on  
me !'

He spoke, and, frowning, to his dinner went,  
Then cool'd and felt some qualms of discon-  
tent ;

And thought on times when he compell'd his  
son

To hear these stories, nay, to beg for one :  
But the wife's wrath o'ercame the brother's  
pain,

And shame was felt, and conscience rose in  
vain.

George yet stole up, he saw his uncle lie  
Sick on the bed, and heard his heavy sigh :  
So he resolved, before he went to rest,  
To comfort one so dear and so distress'd ;  
Then watch'd his time, but with a child-like  
art,

Betray'd a something treasured at his heart :  
Th' observant wife remark'd, ' the boy is  
grown

So like your brother, that he seems his own ;  
So close and sullen ! and I still suspect  
They often meet—do watch them and detect.'

George now remark'd that all was still as  
night,

And hasten'd up with terror and delight ;  
' Uncle !' he cried, and softly tapp'd the door ;  
' Do let me in '—but he could add no more ;  
The careful father caught him in the fact,  
And cried,—' You serpent ! is it thus you act ?  
Back to your mother !'—and with hasty  
blow,

He sent th' indignant boy to grieve below ;  
Then at the door an angry speech began—  
' Is this your conduct ?—is it thus you plan ?  
Seduce my child, and make my house a scene  
Of vile dispute—What is it that you  
mean ?—

George, are you dumb ? do learn to know  
your friends,  
And think awhile on whom your bread  
depends :

What ! not a word ? be thankful I am cool—  
But, sir, beware, nor longer play the fool ;  
Come ! brother, come ! what is it that you seek  
By this rebellion ?—Speak, you villain,  
speak !—

Weeping ! I warrant—sorrow makes you  
dumb :

I'll ope your mouth, impostor ! if I come :  
Let me approach—I'll shake you from the bed,  
You stubborn dog—Oh God ! my brother's  
dead !—

Timid was Isaac, and in all the past  
He felt a purpose to be kind at last ;  
Nor did he mean his brother to depart,  
Till he had shown this kindness of his heart :

But day by day he put the cause aside,  
Induced by av'rice, peevishness, or pride.

But now awaken'd, from this fatal time  
His conscience Isaac felt, and found his crime:  
He raised to George a monumental stone,  
And there retired to sigh and think alone;  
An ague seized him, he grew pale, and shook—  
'So,' said his son, 'would my poor uncle look.'  
'And so, my child, shall I like him expire.'  
'No! you have physic and a cheerful fire.'  
'Unhappy sinner! yes, I'm well supplied  
With every comfort my cold heart denied.'  
He view'd his brother now, but not as one  
Who vex'd his wife by fondness for her son;  
Not as with wooden limb, and seaman's tale,  
The odious pipe, vile grog, or humbler ale:  
He now the worth and grief alone can view  
Of one so mild, so generous, and so true;  
'The frank, kind brother, with such open  
heart,

And I to break it—'twas a daemon's part!'

So Isaac now, as led by conscience, feels,  
Nor his unkindness palliates or conceals;  
'This is your folly,' said his heartless wife:  
'Alas! my folly cost my brother's life;  
I suffer'd him to languish and decay,  
My gentle brother, whom I could not pay,  
And therefore left to pine, and fret his life  
away.'

He takes his son, and bids the boy unfold  
All the good uncle of his feelings told,

All he lamented—and the ready tear  
Falls as he listens, soothed, and grieved to  
hear.

'Did he not curse me, child?'—He never  
cursed,

But could not breathe, and said his heart  
would burst:

'And so will mine:'—Then, father, you  
must pray;

My uncle said it took his pains away.'

Repeating thus his sorrows, Isaac shows  
That he, repenting, feels the debt he owes,  
And from this source alone his every comfort  
flows.

He takes no joy in office, honours, gain;  
They make him humble, nay, they give him  
pain;

'These from my heart,' he cries, 'all feeling  
drove;

They made me cold to nature, dead to love:'

He takes no joy in home, but sighing, sees

A son in sorrow, and a wife at ease:

He takes no joy in office—see him now,

And Burgess Steel has but a passing bow;

Of one sad train of gloomy thoughts possess'd,

He takes no joy in friends, in food, in rest—

Dark are the evil days, and void of peace the  
best.

And thus he lives, if living be to sigh,

And from all comforts of the world to fly,  
Without a hope in life—without a wish to die.

## TALE XXI. THE LEARNED BOY

Like one well studied in a sad ostent,  
To please his grandam.

*Merchant of Venice*, Act ii, Scene 2.

And then the whining school-boy, with his  
satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,  
Unwillingly to school.

*As You Like It*, Act ii, Scene 7.

He is a better scholar than I thought he  
was—

He is a good sprag memory.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act iv, Scene 1.

One that feeds  
On objects, orts, and imitations,  
Which out of use, and stal'd by other men,  
Begin his fashion.

*Julius Caesar*, Act iv, Scene 1.

Oh! torture me no more—I will confess.

*2 Henry VI*, Act iii, Scene 3.

AN honest man was Farmer Jones, and true,  
He did by all as all by him should do;  
Grave, cautious, careful, fond of gain was he,  
Yet famed for rustic hospitality:

Left with his children in a widow'd state,

The quiet man submitted to his fate;

Though prudent matrons waited for his call,

With cool forbearance he avoided all;

Though each profess'd a pure maternal joy,

By kind attention to his feeble boy:

And though a friendly widow knew no rest,

Whilst neighbour Jones was lonely and  
distress'd;



Nay, though the maidens spoke in tender tone  
 Their hearts' concern to see him left alone—  
 Jones still persisted in that cheerless life,  
 As if 'twere sin to take a second wife.

Oh! 'tis a precious thing, when wives are  
 dead,

To find such numbers who will serve instead :  
 And in whatever state a man be thrown,  
 'Tis that precisely they would wish their own ;  
 Left the departed infants—then their joy  
 Is to sustain each lovely girl and boy :  
 Whatever calling his, whatever trade,  
 To that their chief attention has been paid ;  
 His happy taste in all things they approve,  
 His friends their honour, and his food they  
 love ;

His wish for order, prudence in affairs,  
 And equal temper, (thank their stars!) are  
 theirs ;

In fact, it seem'd to be a thing decreed,  
 And fix'd as fate, that marriage must succeed ;  
 Yet some like Jones, with stubborn hearts  
 and hard,

Can hear such claims, and show them no regard.

Soon as our farmer, like a general, found  
 By what strong foes he was encompass'd  
 round—

Engage he dared not, and he could not fly,  
 But saw his hope in gentle parley lie ;  
 With looks of kindness then, and trembling  
 heart,

He met the foe, and art opposed to art.

Now spoke that foe insidious—gentle tones,  
 And gentle looks, assumed for Farmer Jones :  
 'Three girls,' the widow cried, 'a lively three  
 To govern well—indeed it cannot be.'

'Yes,' he replied, 'it calls for pains and care ;  
 But I must bear it :—' Sir, you cannot bear ;  
 Your son is weak, and asks a mother's eye :  
 'That, my kind friend, a father's may supply :'  
 'Such growing griefs your very soul will  
 tease :'

'To grieve another would not give me ease—  
 I have a mother'—'She, poor ancient soul!  
 Can she the spirits of the young control ?  
 Can she thy peace promote, partake thy care,  
 Procure thy comforts, and thy sorrows share ?  
 Age is itself impatient, uncontroll'd :'  
 'But wives like mothers must at length be  
 old.'

'Thou hast shrewd servants—they are evils  
 sore :'

'Yet a shrewd mistress might afflict me more.'

'Wilt thou not be a weary wailing man ?'  
 'Alas! and I must bear it as I can.'

Resisted thus, the widow soon withdrew,  
 That in his pride the hero might pursue ;  
 And off his wonted guard, in some retreat,  
 Find from a foe prepared entire defeat :  
 But he was prudent, for he knew in flight  
 These Parthian warriors turn again and fight :  
 He but at freedom, not at glory aim'd,  
 And only safety by his caution claim'd.

Thus, when a great and powerful state  
 decrees,

Upon a small one, in its love, to seize—  
 It vows in kindness to protect, defend,  
 And be the fond ally, the faithful friend ;  
 It therefore wills that humbler state to place  
 Its hopes of safety in a fond embrace ;  
 Then must that humbler state its wisdom  
 prove,

By kind rejection of such pressing love ;  
 Must dread such dangerous friendship to  
 commence,

And stand collected in its own defence :—  
 Our farmer thus the proffer'd kindness fled,  
 And shunn'd the love that into bondage led.

The widow failing, fresh besiegers came,  
 To share the fate of this retiring dame :  
 And each foresaw a thousand ills attend  
 The man, that fled from so discreet a friend ;  
 And pray'd, kind soul! that no event might  
 make

The harden'd heart of Farmer Jones to ache.

But he still govern'd with resistless hand,  
 And where he could not guide he would com-  
 mand :

With steady view in course direct he steer'd,  
 And his fair daughters loved him, though  
 they fear'd ;

Each had her school, and as his wealth was  
 known,

Each had in time a household of her own.

The boy indeed was, at the grandam's side,  
 Humour'd and train'd, her trouble and her  
 pride :

Companions dear, with speech and spirits  
 mild,

The childish widow and the vapourish child ;  
 This nature prompts ; minds uninform'd and  
 weak

In such alliance ease and comfort seek ;

Push'd by the levity of youth aside,  
 The cares of man, his humour, or his pride,  
 They feel, in their defenceless state, allied :

The child is pleased to meet regard from age,  
The old are pleased ev'n children to engage ;  
And all their wisdom, scorn'd by proud man-  
kind,

'They love to pour into the ductile mind ;  
By its own weakness into error led,  
And by fond age with prejudices fed.

The father, thankful for the good he had,  
Yet saw with pain a whining timid lad ;  
Whom he instructing led through cultured  
fields,

To show what man performs, what nature  
yields :

But Stephen, listless, wander'd from the view,  
From beasts he fled, for butterflies he flew,  
And idly gazed about, in search of something  
new.

The lambs indeed he loved, and wish'd to play  
With things so mild, so harmless, and so gay ;  
Best pleased the weakest of the flock to see,  
With whom he felt a sickly sympathy.

Meantime, the dame was anxious, day and  
night,

To guide the notions of her babe aright,  
And on the favourite mind to throw her  
glimmering light ;

Her Bible-stories she impress'd betimes,  
And fill'd his head with hymns and holy  
rhymes ;

On powers unseen, the good and ill, she dwelt,  
And the poor boy mysterious terrors felt ;  
From frightful dreams, he waking sobb'd in  
dread,

Till the good lady came to guard his bed.

The father wish'd such errors to correct,  
But let them pass in duty and respect :  
But more it grieved his worthy mind to see  
That Stephen never would a farmer be ;  
In vain he tried the shiftless lad to guide,  
And yet 'twas time that something should be  
tried :

He at the village-school perchance might gain  
All that such mind could gather and retain ;  
Yet the good dame affirm'd her favourite child  
Was apt and studious, though sedate and  
mild ;

'That he on many a learned point could speak,  
And that his body, not his mind, was weak.'

The father doubted—but to school was sent  
The timid Stephen, weeping as he went :  
There the rude lads compell'd the child to  
fight,

And sent him bleeding to his home at night ;

At this the grandam more indulgent grew,  
And bade her darling ' shun the beastly crew ;  
Whom Satan ruled, and who were sure to lie,  
Howling in torments, when they came to die ;'  
This was such comfort, that in high disdain  
He told their fate, and felt their blows again :  
Yet if the boy had not a hero's heart,  
Within the school he play'd a better part ;  
He wrote a clean fine hand, and at his slate,  
With more success than many a hero, sat ;  
He thought not much indeed—but what  
depends

On pains and care, was at his fingers' ends

This had his father's praise, who now espied  
A spark of merit, with a blaze of pride :  
And though a farmer he would never make,  
He might a pen with some advantage take ;  
And as a clerk that instrument employ,  
So well adapted to a timid boy.

A London cousin soon a place obtain'd,  
Easy but humble—little could be gain'd :  
The time arrived when youth and age must  
part,

Tears in each eye, and sorrow in each heart ,  
The careful father bade his son attend  
To all his duties, and obey his friend ;  
To keep his church and there behave aright,  
As one existing in his Maker's sight,  
Till acts to habits led, and duty to delight :  
'Then try, my boy, as quickly as you can,  
T' assume the looks and spirit of a man ;  
I say, be honest, faithful, civil, true,  
And this you may, and yet have courage too :  
Heroic men, their country's boast and pride,  
Have fear'd their God, and nothing fear'd  
beside ;

While others daring, yet imbecile, fly  
The power of man, and that of God defy :  
Be manly then, though mild, for sure as fate,  
Thou art, my Stephen, too effeminate ;  
Here, take my purse, and make a worthy use  
( 'Tis fairly stock'd) of what it will produce :  
And now my blessing, not as any charm  
Or conjuration ; but 'twill do no harm.'

Stephen, whose thoughts were wandering  
up and down,

Now charm'd with promised sights in London-  
town,

Now loth to leave his grandam—lost the force,  
The drift and tenor of this grave discourse :  
But, in a general way, he understood  
'Twas good advice, and meant, ' My son, be  
good ;'

And Stephen knew that all such precepts mean,

That lads should read their Bible, and be clean.

The good old lady, though in some distress,  
Begg'd her dear Stephen would his grief suppress ;

'Nay, dry those eyes, my child—and, first of all,

Hold fast thy faith, whatever may befall :

Hear the best preacher, and preserve the text

For meditation, till you hear the next ;

Within your Bible night and morning look—

There is your duty, read no other book ;

Be not in crowds, in broils, in riots seen,

And keep your conscience and your linen clean :

Be you a Joseph, and the time may be,

When kings and rulers will be ruled by thee.'

'Nay,' said the father—'Hush, my son,' replied

The dame—'The Scriptures must not be denied.'

The lad, still weeping, heard the wheels approach,

And took his place within the evening coach,

With heart quite rent asunder : On one side

Was love, and grief, and fear, for scenes untried ;

Wild-beasts and wax-work fill'd the happier part

Of Stephen's varying and divided heart :

This he betray'd by sighs and questions strange,

Of famous shows, the Tower, and the Exchange.

Soon at his desk was placed the curious boy,

Demure and silent at his new employ :

Yet as he could, he much attention paid

To all around him, cautious and afraid ;

On older clerks his eager eyes were fix'd,

But Stephen never in their council mix'd :

Much their contempt he fear'd, for if like them,

He felt assured he should himself contemn ;

'Oh ! they were all so eloquent, so free,

No ! he was nothing—nothing could he be :

They dress so smartly, and so boldly look,

And talk as if they read it from a book ;

But I,' said Stephen, 'will forbear to speak,

And they will think me prudent and not weak.

They talk, the instant they have dropp'd the pen,

Of singing-women and of acting-men ;

Of plays and places where at night they walk

Beneath the lamps, and with the ladies talk ;

While other ladies for their pleasure sing,

Oh ! 'tis a glorious and a happy thing :

They would despise me, did they understand

I dare not look upon a scene so grand :

Or see the plays when critics rise and roar,

And hiss and groan, and cry—Encore !—  
encore !—

There 's one among them looks a little kind ;

If more encouraged, I would ope my mind.'

Alas ! poor Stephen, happier had he kept

His purpose secret, while his envy slept ;

Virtue, perhaps, had conquer'd, or his shame

At least preserved him simple as he came.

A year elapsed before this clerk began

To treat the rustic something like a man :

He then in trifling points the youth advised,

Talk'd of his coat, and had it modernized ;

Or with the lad a Sunday-walk would take,

And kindly strive his passions to awake ;

Meanwhile explaining all they heard and saw,

Till Stephen stood in wonderment and awe :

To a neat garden near the town they stray'd,

Where the lad felt delighted and afraid :

There all he saw was smart, and fine, and fair—

He could but marvel how he ventured there :

Soon he observed, with terror and alarm,

His friend enlock'd within a lady's arm,

And freely talking—'But it is,' said he,

'A near relation, and that makes him free ;'

And much amazed was Stephen, when he knew

This was the first and only interview :

Nay, had that lovely arm by him been seized,

The lovely owner had been highly pleased :

'Alas !' he sigh'd, 'I never can contrive,

At such bold, blessed freedoms to arrive ;

Never shall I such happy courage boast,

I dare as soon encounter with a ghost.'

Now to a play the friendly couple went,

But the boy murmur'd at the money spent ;

'He loved,' he said, 'to buy, but not to

spend—

They only talk awhile, and there 's an end.'

'Come, you shall purchase books,' the friend

replied ;

'You are bewilder'd, and you want a guide ;

To me refer the choice, and you shall find

The light break in upon your stagnant mind !'

The cooler clerks exclaim'd, 'In vain your

art

T' improve a cub without a head or heart ;

Rustics though coarse, and savages though wild,

Our cares may render liberal and mild ;  
But what, my friend, can flow from all these pains ?

There is no dealing with a lack of brains.—  
' True I am hopeless to behold him man,  
But let me make the booby what I can :  
Though the rude stone no polish will display,  
Yet you may strip the rugged coat away.'

Stephen beheld his books—' I love to know  
How money goes—now here is that to show :  
And now,' he cried, ' I shall be pleased to get  
Beyond the Bible—there I puzzle yet.'

He spoke abash'd—' Nay, nay!' the friend replied,

' You need not lay the good old book aside ;  
Antique and curious, I myself indeed  
Read it at times, but as a man should read ;  
A fine old work it is, and I protest  
I hate to hear it treated as a jest ;  
The book has wisdom in it, if you look  
Wisely upon it, as another book :  
For superstition (as our priests of sin  
Are pleased to tell us) makes us blind within :  
Of this hereafter—we will now select  
Some works to please you, others to direct :  
Tales and romances shall your fancy feed,  
And reasoners form your morals and your creed.'

The books were view'd, the price was fairly paid,

And Stephen read undaunted, undismay'd :  
But not till first he paper'd all the row,  
And placed in order, to enjoy the show ;  
Next letter'd all the backs with care and speed,  
Set them in ranks, and then began to read.

The love of order—I the thing receive  
From reverend men, and I in part believe—  
Shows a clear mind and clean, and whoso needs

This love, but seldom in the world succeeds ;  
And yet with this some other love must be,  
Ere I can fully to the fact agree :

Valour and study may by order gain,  
By order sovereigns hold more steady reign ;  
Through all the tribes of nature order runs,  
And rules around in systems and in suns :  
Still has the love of order found a place,  
With all that's low, degrading, mean, and base,

With all that merits scorn, and all that meets  
disgrace :

In the cold miser, of all change afraid,  
In pompous men in public seats obey'd :  
In humble placemen, heralds, solemn drones,  
Fanciers of flowers, and lads like Stephen Jones ;

Order to these is armour and defence,  
And love of method serves in lack of sense.

For rustic youth could I a list produce  
Of Stephen's books, how great might be the use ;

But evil fate was theirs—survey'd, enjoy'd  
Some happy months, and then by force  
destroy'd :

So will'd the fates—but these with patience,  
read,

Had vast effect on Stephen's heart and head.

This soon appear'd—within a single week  
He oped his lips, and made attempt to speak ;  
He fail'd indeed—but still his friend confess'd  
The best have fail'd, and he had done his best :

The first of swimmers, when at first he swims,  
Has little use or freedom in his limbs ;

Nay, when at length he strikes with manly force,

The cramp may seize him, and impede his course.

Encouraged thus, our clerk again essay'd  
The daring act, though daunted and afraid ;  
Succeeding now, though partial his success,  
And pertness mark'd his manner and address,  
Yet such improvement issued from his books,  
That all discern'd it in his speech and looks ;  
He ventured then on every theme to speak,  
And felt no feverish tingling in his cheek ;  
His friend approving, hail'd the happy change,  
The clerks exclaim'd—' 'Tis famous, and 'tis strange.'

Two years had pass'd ; the youth attended still,

(Though thus accomplish'd) with a ready quill ;

He sat th' allotted hours, though hard the case,

While timid prudence ruled in virtue's place ;  
By promise bound, the son his letters penn'd  
To his good parent, at the quarter's end.

At first he sent those lines, the state to tell  
Of his own health, and hoped his friends were well ;

He kept their virtuous precepts in his mind,  
And needed nothing—then his name was  
sign'd :

But now he wrote of Sunday walks and views,  
Of actors' names, choice novels, and strange  
news ;

How coats were cut, and of his urgent need  
For fresh supply, which he desired with speed.  
The father doubted, when these letters came,  
To what they tended, yet was loth to blame :  
' Stephen was once my *duteous son*, and now  
*My most obedient*—this can I allow ?

Can I with pleasure or with patience see  
A boy at once so heartless, and so free ? '

But soon the kinsman heavy tidings told,  
That love and prudence could no more with-  
hold :

' Stephen, though steady at his desk, was  
grown

A rake and coxcomb—this he grieved to own ;  
His cousin left his church, and spent the day  
Lounging about in quite a heathen way ;  
Sometimes he swore, but had indeed the grace  
To show the shame imprinted on his face :  
I search'd his room, and in his absence read  
Books that I knew would turn a stronger  
head ;

The works of atheists half the number made,  
The rest were lives of harlots leaving trade ;  
Which neither man nor boy would deign to  
read,

If from the scandal and pollution freed :  
I sometimes threaten'd, and would fairly state  
My sense of things so vile and profligate ;  
But I'm a cit, such works are lost on me—  
They're knowledge, and (good Lord !)   
philosophy.'

' Oh, send him down,' the father soon  
replied ;

' Let me behold him, and my skill be tried :  
If care and kindness lose their wonted use,  
Some rougher medicine will the end produce.'

Stephen with grief and anger heard his  
doom—

' Go to the farmer ? to the rustic's home ?  
Curse the base threaten'ng—' ' Nay, child,  
never curse ;

Corrupted long, your case is growing worse.'—  
' I ! ' quoth the youth, ' I challenge all man-  
kind

To find a fault ; what fault have you to find ?  
Improve I not in manner, speech, and grace ?  
Inquire—my friends will tell it to your face ;  
Have I been taught to guard his kine and  
sheep ?

A man like me has other things to keep ;

This let him know.'—' It would his wrath  
excite :

But come, prepare, you must away to-night.'  
' What ! leave my studies, my improvements  
leave,

My faithful friends and intimates to grieve ! '—  
' Go to your father, Stephen, let him see  
All these improvements ; they are lost on me.'

The youth, though loth, obey'd, and soon  
he saw

The farmer-father, with some signs of awe ;  
Who kind, yet silent, waited to behold  
How one would act, so daring, yet so cold :  
And soon he found, between the friendly pair  
That secrets pass'd which he was not to share ;  
But he resolved those secrets to obtain,  
And quash rebellion in his lawful reign.

Stephen, though vain, was with his father  
mute ;

He fear'd a crisis, and he shunn'd dispute ;  
And yet he long'd with youthful pride to show  
He knew such things as farmers could not  
know ;

These to the grandam he with freedom spoke,  
Saw her amazement, and enjoy'd the joke :  
But on the father when he cast his eye,  
Something he found that made his valour shy ;  
And thus there seem'd to be a hollow truce,  
Still threaten'ng something dismal to produce.

Ere this the father at his leisure read  
The son's choice volumes, and his wonder fled ;  
He saw how wrought the works of either kind  
On so presuming, yet so weak a mind ;  
These in a chosen hour he made his prey,  
Condemn'd, and bore with vengeful thoughts  
away ;

Then in a close recess the couple near,  
He sat unseen to see, unheard to hear.

There soon a trial for his patience came ;  
Beneath were placed the youth and ancient  
dame,

Each on a purpose fix'd—but neither thought  
How near a foe, with power and vengeance  
fraught.

And now the matron told, as tidings sad,  
What she had heard of her beloved lad ;  
How he to graceless, wicked men gave heed,  
And wicked books would night and morning  
read ;

Some former lectures she again began,  
And begg'd attention of her little man ;  
She brought, with many a pious boast, in view  
His former studies, and condemn'd the new ;

Once he the names of saints and patriarchs  
old,

Judges and kings, and chiefs and prophets,  
told ;

Then he in winter-nights the Bible took,  
To count how often in the sacred book  
The sacred name appear'd, and could rehearse  
Which were the middle chapter, word, and  
verse,

The very letter in the middle placed,  
And so employ'd the hours that others waste.

'Such wert thou once ; and now, my child,  
they say

Thy faith like water runneth fast away ;  
The prince of devils hath, I fear, beguiled  
The ready wit of my backsliding child.'

On this, with lofty looks, our clerk began  
His grave rebuke, as he assumed the man—

'There is no devil,' said the hopeful youth,  
'Nor prince of devils ; that I know for truth :  
Have I not told you how my books describe  
The arts of priests and all the canting tribe ?  
Your Bible mentions Egypt, where it seems  
Was Joseph found when Pharaoh dream'd his  
dreams :

New, in that place, in some bewilder'd head,  
(The learned write), religious dreams were bred ;  
Whence through the earth, with various forms  
combined,

They came to frighten and afflict mankind,  
Prone (so I read) to let a priest invade  
Their souls with awe, and by his craft be made  
Slave to his will, and profit to his trade :

So say my books, and how the rogues agreed  
To blind the victims, to defraud and lead ;  
When joys above to ready dupes were sold,  
And hell was threaten'd to the shy and cold.

'Why so amazed, and so prepared to pray ?  
As if a Being heard a word we say :

This may surprise you ; I myself began  
To feel disturb'd, and to my Bible ran ;  
I now am wiser—yet agree in this,  
The book has things that are not much amiss ;  
It is a fine old work, and I protest  
I hate to hear it treated as a jest :  
The book has wisdom in it, if you look  
Wisely upon it as another book.'

'Oh ! wicked ! wicked ! my unhappy  
child,

How hast thou been by evil men beguiled !'  
'How ! wicked, say you ? you can little  
guess

The gain of that which you call wickedness :

Why, sins you think it sinful but to name  
Have gain'd both wives and widows wealth  
and fame ;

And 'tis because such people never dread  
Those threaten'd pains ; hell comes not in  
their head :

Love is our nature, wealth we all desire,  
And what we wish 'tis lawful to acquire ;  
So say my books—and what beside they show  
'Tis time to let this honest farmer know.

Nay, look not grave ; am I commanded down  
To feed his cattle and become his clown ?  
Is such his purpose ? then he shall be told  
The vulgar insult—'

—'Hold, in mercy hold—'

'Father, oh ! father ! throw the whip away ;  
I was but jesting, on my knees I pray—

There, hold his arm—oh ! leave us not alone :  
In pity cease, and I will yet atone  
For all my sin—' In vain ; stroke after  
stroke,

On side and shoulder, quick as mill-wheels  
broke ;

Quick as the patient's pulse, who trembling  
cried,

And still the parent with a stroke replied ;  
Till all the medicine he prepared was dealt,  
And every bone the precious influence felt ;  
Till all the panting flesh was red and raw,  
And every thought was turn'd to fear and awe ;  
Till every doubt to due respect gave place—  
Such cures are done when doctors know the  
case.

'Oh ! I shall die—my father ! do receive  
My dying words ; indeed I do believe ;  
The books are lying books, I know it well,  
There is a devil, oh ! there is a hell ;

And I'm a sinner : spare me, I am young,  
My sinful words were only on my tongue ;  
My heart consented not ; 'tis all a lie :  
Oh ! spare me then, I'm not prepared to die.'

'Vain, worthless, stupid wretch !' the  
father cried,

'Dost thou presume to teach ? art thou a  
guide ?

Driveller and dog, it gave the mind distress  
To hear thy thoughts in their religious dress ;  
Thy pious folly moved my strong disdain,  
Yet I forgave thee for thy want of brain :  
But Job in patience must the man exceed  
Who could endure thee in thy present creed ;  
Is it for thee, thou idiot, to pretend  
The wicked cause a helping hand to lend ?

Canst thou a judge in any question be ?  
Atheists themselves would scorn a friend like  
thee.—

‘Lo ! yonder blaze thy worthies ; in one  
heap

Thy scoundrel-favourites must for ever sleep :  
Each yields its poison to the flame in turn,  
Where whores and infidels are doom’d to burn ;  
Two noble faggots made the flame you see,  
Reserving only two fair twigs for thee ;  
That in thy view the instruments may stand,  
And be in future ready for my hand :

The just mementos that, though silent, show  
Whence thy correction and improvements  
flow ;

Beholding these, thou wilt confess their power,  
And feel the shame of this important hour.

‘Hadst thou been humble, I had first  
design’d

By care from folly to have freed thy mind ;  
And when a clean foundation had been laid,  
Our priest, more able, would have lent his  
aid :

But thou art weak, and force must folly guide,  
And thou art vain, and pain must humble  
pride :

Teachers men honour, learners they allure ;  
But learners teaching, of contempt are sure ;  
Scorn is their certain meed, and smart their  
only Cure !’

# TALES OF THE HALL

[1819]

## TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF RUTLAND

MADAM,

It is the privilege of those who are placed in that elevated situation to which your Grace is an ornament, that they give honour to the person upon whom they confer a favour. When I dedicate to your Grace the fruits of many years, and speak of my debt to the House of Rutland, I feel that I am not without pride in the confession nor insensible to the honour which such gratitude implies. Forty years have elapsed since this debt commenced. On my entrance into the cares of life, and while contending with its difficulties, a Duke and Duchess of Rutland observed and protected me—in my progress a Duke and Duchess of Rutland favoured and assisted me—and, when I am retiring from the world, a Duke and Duchess of

Rutland receive my thanks, and accept my offering. All, even in this world of mutability, is not change: I have experienced unvaried favour—I have felt undiminished respect.

With the most grateful remembrance of what I owe, and the most sincere conviction of the little I can return, I present these pages to your Grace's acceptance, and beg leave to subscribe myself,

May it please your Grace,

With respect and gratitude,

Your Grace's

Most obedient and devoted Servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

*Trowbridge,  
June, 1819.*

## PREFACE

If I did not fear that it would appear to my readers like arrogance, or if it did not seem to myself indecorous to send two volumes of considerable magnitude from the press without preface or apology, without one petition for the reader's attention, or one plea for the writer's defects, I would most willingly spare myself an address of this kind, and more especially for these reasons; first, because a preface is a part of a book seldom honoured by a reader's perusal; secondly, because it is both difficult and distressing to write that which we think will be disregarded, and thirdly, because I do not conceive that I am called upon for such introductory matter by any of the motives which usually

influence an author when he composes his prefatory address.

When a writer, whether of poetry or prose, first addresses the public, he has generally something to offer which relates to himself or to his work, and which he considers as a necessary prelude to the work itself, to prepare his readers for the entertainment or the instruction they may expect to receive, for one of these every man who publishes must suppose he affords—this the act itself implies; and in proportion to his conviction of this fact must be his feeling of the difficulty in which he has placed himself: the difficulty consists in reconciling the implied presumption of the undertaking, whether to please or



to instruct mankind, with the diffidence and modesty of an untried candidate for fame or favour. Hence originate the many reasons an author assigns for his appearance in that character, whether they actually exist, or are merely offered to hide the motives which cannot be openly avowed; namely, the want or the vanity of the man, as his wishes for profit or reputation may most prevail with him.

Now, reasons of this kind, whatever they may be, cannot be availing beyond their first appearance. An author, it is true, may again feel his former apprehensions, may again be elevated or depressed by the suggestions of vanity and diffidence, and may be again subject to the cold and hot fit of aguish expectation; but he is no more a stranger to the press, nor has the motives or privileges of one who is. With respect to myself, it is certain they belong not to me. Many years have elapsed since I became a candidate for indulgence as an inexperienced writer; and to assume the language of such writer now, and to plead for his indulgences, would be proof of my ignorance of the place assigned to me, and the degree of favour which I have experienced; but of that place I am not uninformed, and with that degree of favour I have no reason to be dissatisfied.

It was the remark of the pious, but on some occasions the querulous, author of the *Night Thoughts*, that he had 'been so long remembered, he was forgotten;' an expression in which there is more appearance of discontent than of submission: if he had patience, it was not the patience that *smiles at grief*. It is not therefore entirely in the sense of the good Doctor that I apply these words to myself, or to my more early publications. So many years indeed have passed since their first appearance, that I have no reason to complain, on that account, if they be now slumbering with other poems of decent reputation in their day—not dead indeed, nor entirely forgotten, but certainly not the subjects of discussion or conversation as when first introduced to the notice of the public, by those whom the public will not forget, whose protection was credit to their author, and whose approbation was fame to them. Still these early publications had so long preceded any other, that, if not altogether

unknown, I was, when I came again before the public, in a situation which excused, and perhaps rendered necessary some explanation; but this also has passed away, and none of my readers will now take the trouble of making any inquiries respecting my motives for writing or for publishing these Tales or verses of any description: known to each other as readers and authors are known, they will require no preface to bespeak their good will, nor shall I be under the necessity of soliciting the kindness which experience has taught me, endeavouring to merit, I shall not fail to receive.

There is one motive—and it is a powerful one—which sometimes induces an author, and more particularly a poet, to ask the attention of his readers to his prefatory address. This is when he has some favourite and peculiar style or manner which he would explain and defend, and chiefly if he should have adopted a mode of versification of which an uninitiated reader was not likely to perceive either the merit or the beauty. In such case it is natural, and surely pardonable, to assert and to prove, as far as reason will bear us on, that such method of writing has both; to show in what the beauty consists, and what peculiar difficulty there is, which, when conquered, creates the merit. How far any particular poet has or has not succeeded in such attempt is not my business nor my purpose to inquire: I have no peculiar notion to defend, no poetical heterodoxy to support, nor theory of any kind to vindicate or oppose—that which I have used is probably the most common measure in our language; and therefore, whatever be its advantages or defects, they are too well known to require from me a description of the one, or an apology for the other.

Perhaps still more frequent than any explanation of the work is an account of the author himself, the situation in which he is placed, or some circumstances of peculiar kind in his life, education, or employment. How often has youth been pleaded for deficiencies or redundancies, for the existence of which youth may be an excuse, and yet be none for their exposure! Age too has been pleaded for the errors and failings in a work which the octogenarian had the discernment to perceive, and yet had not the

fortitude to suppress. Many other circumstances are made apologies for a writer's infirmities; his much employment, and many avocations, adversity, necessity, and the good of mankind. These, or any of them, however availing in themselves, avail not me. I am neither so young nor so old, so much engaged by one pursuit, or by many,—I am not so urged by want, or so stimulated by a desire of public benefit,—that I can borrow one apology from the many which I have named. How far they prevail with our readers, or with our judges, I cannot tell; and it is unnecessary for me to inquire into the validity of arguments which I have not to produce.

If there be any combination of circumstances which may be supposed to affect the mind of a reader, and in some degree to influence his judgment, the junction of youth, beauty, and merit in a female writer may be allowed to do this; and yet one of the most forbidding of titles is 'Poems by a very young Lady,' and this although beauty and merit were largely insinuated. Ladies, it is true, have of late little need of any indulgence as authors, and names may readily be found which rather excite the envy of man than plead for his lenity. Our estimation of title also in a writer has materially varied from that of our predecessors; 'Poems by a Nobleman' would create a very different sensation in our minds from that which was formerly excited when they were so announced. A noble author had then no pretensions to a seat so secure on the 'sacred hill,' that authors not noble, and critics not gentle, dared not attack; and they delighted to take revenge by their contempt and derision of the poet, for the pain which their submission and respect to the man had cost them. But in our times we find that a nobleman writes, not merely as well, but better than other men; insomuch that readers in general begin to fancy that the Muses have relinquished their old partiality for rags and a garret, and are become altogether aristocratical in their choice. A conceit so well supported by fact would be readily admitted, did it not appear at the same time, that there were in the higher ranks of society men, who could write as tamely, or as absurdly, as they had ever been accused of doing. We may, therefore,

regard the works of any noble author as extraordinary productions; but must not found any theory upon them; and, notwithstanding their appearance, must look on genius and talent as we are wont to do on time and chance, that happen indifferently to all mankind.

But whatever influence any peculiar situation of a writer might have, it cannot be a benefit to me, who have no such peculiarity. I must rely upon the willingness of my readers to be pleased with that which was designed to give them pleasure, and upon the cordiality which naturally springs from a remembrance of our having before parted without any feelings of disgust on the one side, or of mortification on the other.

With this hope I would conclude the present subject; but I am called upon by duty to acknowledge my obligations, and more especially for two of the following Tales:—the *Story of Lady Barbara* in Book XVI and that of *Ellen* in Book XVIII. The first of these I owe to the kindness of a fair friend, who will, I hope, accept the thanks which I very gratefully pay, and pardon me if I have not given to her relation the advantages which she had so much reason to expect. The other story, that of *Ellen*, could I give it in the language of him who related it to me, would please and affect my readers. It is by no means my only debt, though the one I now more particularly acknowledge; for who shall describe all that he gains in the social, the unrestrained, and the frequent conversations with a friend, who is at once communicative and judicious?—whose opinions, on all subjects of literary kind, are founded on good taste, and exquisite feeling? It is one of the greatest 'pleasures of my memory' to recall in absence those conversations; and if I do not in direct terms mention with whom I conversed, it is both because I have no permission, and my readers will have no doubt.

The first intention of the poet must be to please; for, if he means to instruct, he must render the instruction which he hopes to convey palatable and pleasant. I will not assume the tone of a moralist, nor promise that my relations shall be beneficial to mankind; but I have endeavoured, not unsuccessfully I trust, that, in whatsoever I have

related or described, there should be nothing introduced which has a tendency to excuse the vices of man, by associating with them sentiments that demand our respect, and talents that compel our admiration. There is nothing in these pages which has the unschiewous effect of confounding truth and error, or confusing our ideas of right and wrong. I know not which is most injurious to the yielding minds of the young, to render virtue less respectable by making its possessors ridiculous, or by describing vice with so many fascinating qualities, that it is either lost in the assemblage, or pardoned by the association. Man's heart is sufficiently prone to make excuse for man's infirmity; and needs not the aid of poetry, or eloquence, to take from vice its native deformity. A character may be respectable with all its faults, but it must not be made respectable by them. It is grievous when genius will condescend to place strong and evil spirits in a commanding view, or excite our pity and admiration for men of talents, degraded

by crime, when struggling with misfortune. It is but too true that great and wicked men may be so presented to us, as to demand our applause, when they should excite our abhorrence; but it is surely for the interest of mankind, and our own self-direction, that we should ever keep at unapproachable distance our respect and our reproach.

I have one observation more to offer. It may appear to some that a minister of religion, in the decline of life, should have no leisure for such amusements as these; and for them I have no reply;—but to those who are more indulgent to the propensities, the studies, and the habits of mankind, I offer some apology when I produce these volumes, not as the occupations of my life, but the fruits of my leisure, the employment of that time which, if not given to them, had passed in the vacuity of unrecorded idleness; or had been lost in the indulgence of unregistered thoughts and fancies, that melt away in the instant they are conceived, and *'leave not a wrack behind.'*

## TALES OF THE HALL

### BOOK I. THE HALL

The Meeting of the Brothers, George and Richard—The Retirement of the elder to his native Village—Objects and Persons whom he found there—The Brother described in various Particulars—The Invitation and Journey of the younger—His Soliloquy and Arrival.

THE Brothers met who many a year had past  
Since their last meeting, and that seem'd  
their last;  
They had no parent then or common friend  
Who might their hearts to mutual kindness  
bend;  
Who, touching both in their divided state,  
Might generous thoughts and warm desires  
create;  
For there are minds whom we must first excite  
And urge to feeling, ere they can unite;

As we may hard and stubborn metals beat  
And blend together, if we duly heat.

The elder, George, had past his threescore  
years,

A busy actor, sway'd by hopes and fears  
Of powerful kind; and he had fill'd the parts  
That try our strength and agitate our hearts.  
He married not, and yet he well approved  
The social state; but then he rashly loved;  
Gave to a strong delusion all his youth,  
Led by a vision till alarm'd by truth:  
That vision past, and of that truth possess,  
His passions wearied and disposed to rest,  
George yet had will and power a place to  
choose,  
Where Hope might sleep, and terminate her  
views.

He chose his native village, and the hill  
He climb'd a boy had its attraction still;

With that small brook beneath, where he  
would stand,  
And stooping fill the hollow of his hand  
To quench th' impatient thirst—then stop  
awhile

To see the sun upon the waters smile,  
In that sweet weariness, when, long denied,  
We drink and view the fountain that supplied  
The sparkling bliss—and feel, if not express,  
Our perfect ease in that sweet weariness.

The oaks yet flourish'd in that fertile ground,  
Where still the church with lofty tower was  
found ;

And still that Hall, a first, a favourite view,  
But not the elms that form'd its avenue ;  
They fell ere George arrived, or yet had stood,  
For he in reverence held the living wood,  
That widely spreads in earth the deepening  
root,

And lifts to heaven the still aspiring shoot ;  
From age to age they fill'd a growing space,  
But hid the mansion they were meant to  
grace.

It was an ancient, venerable hall,  
And once surrounded by a moat and wall ;  
A part was added by a squire of taste,  
Who, while unvalued acres ran to waste,  
Made spacious rooms, whence he could look  
about,  
And mark improvements as they rose with-  
out :

He fill'd the moat, he took the wall away,  
He thinn'd the park, and bade the view be  
gay :

The scene was rich, but he who should behold  
Its worth was poor, and so the whole was sold.

Just then our merchant from his desk  
retired,

And made the purchase that his heart desired ;  
The Hall of Binning, his delight a boy,  
That gave his fancy in her flight employ ;  
Here, from his father's modest home, he gazed,  
Its grandeur charm'd him, and its height  
amazed :

Work of past ages ; and the brick-built place  
Where he resided was in much disgrace ;  
But never in his fancy's proudest dream  
Did he the master of that mansion seem :  
Young was he then, and little did he know  
What years on care and diligence bestow ;  
Now young no more, retired to views well  
known,

He finds that object of his awe his own ;

The Hall at Binning!—how he loves the gloom  
That sun-excluding window gives the room ;  
Those broad brown stairs on which he loves  
to tread ;

Those beams within ; without, that length of  
lead,

On which the names of wanton boys appear,  
Who died old men, and left memorials here,  
Carvings of feet and hands, and knots and  
flowers,

The fruits of busy minds in idle hours.

Here, while our squire the modern part  
possess'd,

His partial eye upon the old would rest ;  
That best his comforts gave—this sooth'd  
his feelings best.

Here day by day, withdrawn from busy life,  
No child t' awake him, to engage no wife,  
When friends were absent, not to books  
inclined,

He found a sadness steal upon his mind ;  
Sighing, the works of former lords to see,  
' I follow them,' he cried, ' but who will follow  
me ? '

Some ancient men whom he a boy had  
known

He knew again, their changes were his own ;  
Comparing now he view'd them, and he felt  
That time with him in lenient mood had dealt ;  
While some the half-distinguish'd features  
bore

That he was doubtful if he saw before,  
And some in memory lived, whom he must  
see no more.

Here George had found, yet scarcely hoped  
to find,

Companions meet, minds fitted to his mind ;  
Here, late and loth, the worthy rector came,  
From college dinners and a fellow's fame ;  
Yet, here when fix'd, was happy to behold  
So near a neighbour in a friend so old :  
Boys on one form they parted, now to meet  
In equal state, their worships on one seat.

Here were a sister-pair, who seem'd to live  
With more respect than affluence can give ;  
Although not affluent, they, by nature graced,  
Had sense and virtue, dignity and taste ;  
Their minds by sorrows, by misfortunes tried,  
Were vex'd and heal'd, were pain'd and  
purified.

Hither a sage physician came, and plann'd,  
With books his guides, improvements on his  
land ;

Nor less to mind than matter would he give  
His noble thoughts, to know how spirits live  
And what is spirit; him his friends advised  
To think with fear, but caution he despised,  
And hints of fear provoked him till he dared  
Beyond himself, nor bold assertion spared  
But fiercely spoke, like those who strongly  
feel,

' Priests and their craft, enthusiasts and their  
zeal.'

More yet appear'd, of whom as we pro-  
ceed—

Ah! yield not yet to languor—you shall read.

But ere the events that from this meeting  
rose,

Be they of pain or pleasure, we disclose,  
It is of custom, doubtless is of use,  
That we our heroes first should introduce.

Come, then, fair Truth! and let me clearly  
see

The minds I paint, as they are seen in thee;  
To me their merits and their faults impart;  
Give me to say, 'frail being! such thou  
art,'

And closely let me view the naked human  
heart.

George loved to think; but as he late  
began

To muse on all the grander thoughts of man,  
He took a solemn and a serious view  
Of his religion, and he found it true;  
Firmly, yet meekly, he his mind applied  
To this great subject, and was satisfied.

He then proceeded, not so much intent,  
But still in earnest, and to church he went:  
Although they found some difference in their  
creed,

He and his pastor cordially agreed;  
Convinced that they who would the truth  
obtain

By disputation, find their efforts vain;  
The church he view'd as liberal minds will  
view,

And there he fix'd his principles and pew.

He saw, he thought he saw, how weakness,  
pride,

And habit, draw seceding crowds aside:  
Weakness that loves on trifling points to  
dwell,

Pride that at first from Heaven's own worship  
fell,

And habit, going where it went before,  
Or to the meeting or the tavern door.

George loved the cause of freedom, but  
reproved

All who with wild and boyish ardour loved;  
Those who believed they never could be  
free,

Except when fighting for their liberty;  
Who by their very clamour and complaint  
Invite coercion or enforce restraint:

He thought a trust so great, so good a cause,  
Was only to be kept by guarding laws;  
For public blessings firmly to secure,  
We must a lessening of the good endure.

The public waters are to none denied,  
All drink the stream, but only few must guide;

There must be reservoirs to hold supply,  
And channels form'd to send the blessing by;

The public good must be a private care,  
None all they would may have, but all ashare:

So we must freedom with restraint enjoy,  
What crowds possess they will, uncheck'd,

destroy;

And hence, that freedom may to all be dealt,  
Guards must be fix'd, and safety must be felt.

So thought our squire, nor wish'd the guards  
t' appear

So strong, that safety might be bought too  
dear;

The constitution was the ark that he  
Join'd to support with zeal and sanctity,  
Nor would expose it, as th' accursed son  
His father's weakness, to be gazed upon.

I for that freedom make, said he, my prayer,  
That suits with all, like atmospheric air;  
That is to mortal man by heaven assign'd,  
Who cannot bear a pure and perfect kind:  
The lighter gas, that, taken in the frame,  
The spirit heats, and sets the blood in flame,  
Such is the freedom which when men approve,  
They know not what a dangerous thing they  
love.

George chose the company of men of sense,  
But could with wit in moderate share dis-  
pense;

He wish'd in social ease his friends to meet,  
When still he thought the female accent  
sweet;

Well from the ancient, better from the young,  
He loved the lisping of the mother tongue.

He ate and drank, as much as men who  
think

Of life's best pleasures, ought to eat or drink;  
Men purely temperate might have taken less,  
But still he loved indulgence, not excess;

Nor would alone the grants of fortune taste,  
But shared the wealth he judged it crime to waste,

And thus obtain'd the sure reward of care ;  
For none can spend like him who learns to spare

Time, thought, and trouble made the man appear—

By nature shrewd—sarcastic and severe ;  
Still he was one whom those who fully knew  
Esteem'd and trusted, one correct and true ;  
All on his word with surety might depend,  
Kind as a man, and faithful as a friend :  
But him the many know not, knew not cause  
In their new squire for censure or applause ;  
Ask them, ' Who dwelt within that lofty wall ? '

And they would say, ' the gentleman was tall ;  
Look'd old when follow'd, but alert when met,  
And had some vigour in his movements yet ;  
He stoops, but not as one infirm ; and wears  
Dress that becomes his station and his years.'

Such was the man who from the world return'd,

Nor friend nor foe ; he prized it not, nor spurn'd ;

But came and sat him in his village down,  
Safe from its smile, and careless of its frown :  
He, fairly looking into life's account,  
Saw frowns and favours were of like amount ;  
And viewing all—his perils, prospects, purse,  
He said, ' Content ! 'tis well it is no worse.'

Through ways more rough had fortune

RICHARD led,

The world he traversed was the book he read ;  
Hence clashing notions and opinions strange  
Lodged in his mind ; all liable to change.

By nature generous, open, daring, free,  
The vice he hated was hypocrisy :

Religious notions, in her latter years,  
His mother gave, admonish'd by her fears ;  
To these he added, as he chanced to read  
A pious work or learn a christian creed :

He heard the preacher by the highway side,  
The church's teacher, and the meeting's guide ;  
And mixing all their matters in his brain,  
Distill'd a something he could ill explain ;  
But still it served him for his daily use,  
And kept his lively passions from abuse ;  
For he believed, and held in reverence high,  
The truth so dear to man—' not all shall die.'  
The minor portions of his creed hung loose,  
For time to shapen and an whole produce ;

This love effected and a favourite maid,  
With clearer views, his honest flame repaid ;  
Hers was the thought correct, the hope sublime,

She shaped his creed, and did the work of time.

He spake of freedom as a nation's cause,  
And loved, like George, our liberty and laws ;  
But had more youthful ardour to be free,  
And stronger fears for injured liberty :  
With him, on various questions that arose,  
The monarch's servants were the people's foes ;

And though he fought with all a Briton's zeal,  
He felt for France as Freedom's children feel ;  
Went far with her in what she thought reform,  
And hail'd the revolutionary storm ;  
Yet would not here, where there was least to win,

And most to lose, the doubtful work begin ;  
But look'd on change with some religious fear,  
And cried, with filial dread, ' Ah ! come not here.'

His friends he did not as the thoughtful choose ;

Long to deliberate was, he judged, to lose :  
Frankly he join'd the free, nor suffer'd pride  
Or doubt to part them, whom their fate allied ;  
Men with such minds at once each other aid,  
' Frankness,' they cry, ' with frankness is repaid ;

If honest, why suspect ? if poor, of what afraid ?

Wealth's timid votaries may with caution move,

Be it our wisdom to confide and love.'

So pleasures came, (not purchased first or plann'd,)

But the chance pleasures that the poor command ;

They came but seldom, they remain'd not long,

Nor gave him time to question ' are they wrong ? '

These he enjoy'd, and left to after time

To judge the folly or decide the crime ;

Sure had he been, he had perhaps been pure  
From this reproach—but Richard was not sure—

Yet from the sordid vice, the mean, the base,  
He stood aloof—death frown'd not like disgrace.

With handsome figure, and with manly air,  
He pleased the sex, who all to him were fair ;

With filial love he look'd on forms decay'd,  
 And admiration's debt to beauty paid ;  
 On sea or land, wherever Richard went,  
 He felt affection, and he found content ;  
 There was in him a strong presiding hope  
 In fortune's tempests, and it bore him up :  
 But when that mystic vine his mansion graced,  
 When numerous branches round his board  
 were placed,

When sighs of apprehensive love were heard  
 Then first the spirit of the hero fear'd ;  
 Then he reflected on the father's part,  
 And all an husband's sorrow touch'd his heart ;  
 Then thought he, ' Who will their assistance  
 lend ?

And be the children's guide, the parent's  
 friend ?

Who shall their guardian, their protector be ?  
 I have a brother—Well !—and so has he.'

And now they met : a message—kind, 'tis  
 true,

But verbal only—ask'd an interview ;  
 And many a mile, perplex'd by doubt and  
 fear,

Had Richard past, unwilling to appear—  
 ' How shall I now my unknown way explore,  
 He proud and rich—I very proud and poor ?  
 Perhaps my friend a dubious speech mistook,  
 And George may meet me with a stranger's  
 look ;

Then to my home when I return again,  
 How shall I bear this business to explain,  
 And tell of hopes raised high, and feelings  
 hurt, in vain ?

' How stands the case ? My brother's friend  
 and mine

Met at an inn, and sat them down to dine :  
 When having settled all their own affairs,  
 And kindly canvass'd such as were not theirs,  
 Just as my friend was going to retire,  
 " Stay !—you will see the brother of our  
 squire,"

Said his companion ; " be his friend, and tell  
 The captain that his brother loves him well,

And when he has no better thing in view,  
 Will be rejoiced to see him—Now, adieu ! "

' Well ! here I am ; and, Brother, take you  
 heed,

I am not come to flatter you and feed ;  
 You shall no soother, fawner, hearer find,  
 I will not brush your coat, nor smooth your  
 mind ;

I will not hear your tales the whole day long,  
 Nor swear you're right if I believe you wrong :  
 Nor be a witness of the facts you state,  
 Nor as my own adopt your love or hate :  
 I will not earn my dinner when I dine,  
 By taking all your sentiments for mine ;  
 Nor watch the guiding motions of your eye,  
 Before I venture question or reply ;  
 Nor when you speak affect an awe profound,  
 Sinking my voice, as if I fear'd the sound ;  
 Nor to your looks obediently attend,  
 The poor, the humble, the dependant friend :  
 Yet son of that dear mother could I meet—  
 But lo ! the mansion—'tis a fine old seat !'

The Brothers met, with both too much at  
 heart

To be observant of each other's part ;  
 ' Brother, I'm glad,' was all that George could  
 say,

Then stretch'd his hand, and turn'd his head  
 away ;

For he in tender tears had no delight,  
 But scorn'd the thought, and ridiculed the  
 sight ;

Yet now with pleasure, though with some  
 surprise,

He felt his heart o'erflowing at his eyes.

Richard, mean time, made some attempts  
 to speak,

Strong in his purpose, in his trial weak ;  
 We cannot nature by our wishes rule,  
 Nor at our will her warm emotions cool ;—  
 At length affection, like a risen tide,  
 Stood still, and then seem'd slowly to subside ;  
 Each on the other's looks had power to dwell,  
 And Brother Brother greeted passing well.

## BOOK II. THE BROTHERS

Further Account of the Meeting—Of the Men  
—The Mother—The Uncle—The private  
Tutor—The second Husband—Dinner Con-  
versation—School of the Rector and Squire  
—The Master.

At length the Brothers met, no longer tried  
By those strong feelings that in time subside ;  
Not fluent yet their language, but the eye  
And action spoke both question and reply ;  
Till the heart rested, and could calmly feel,  
Till the shook compass felt the settling steel ;  
Till playful smiles on graver converse broke,  
And either speaker less abruptly spoke :  
Still was there oftentimes silence, silence blest,  
Expressive, thoughtful—their emotions' rest ;  
Pauses that came not from a want of thought,  
But want of ease, by wearied passion sought ;  
For souls, when hurried by such powerful  
force,

Rest, and retrace the pleasure of the course.  
They differ'd much ; yet might observers  
trace

Likeness of features both in mind and face ;  
Pride they possess'd, that neither strove to  
hide,

But not offensive, not obtrusive pride :  
Unlike had been their life, unlike the fruits,  
Of different tempers, studies, and pursuits ;  
Nay, in such varying scenes the men had  
moved,

'Twas passing strange that aught alike they  
loved :

But all distinction now was thrown apart,  
While these strong feelings ruled in either  
heart.

As various colours in a painted ball,  
While it has rest, are seen distinctly all ;  
Till, whirl'd around by some exterior force,  
They all are blended in the rapid course :  
So in repose, and not by passion sway'd,  
We saw the difference by their habits made ;  
But, tried by strong emotions, they became  
Fill'd with one love, and were in heart the  
same ;

Joy to the face its own expression sent,  
And gave a likeness in the looks it lent.

All now was sober certainty ; the joy  
That no strong passions swell till they de-  
stroy :

For they, like wine, our pleasures raise so high,  
That they subdue our strength, and then they  
die.

George in his brother felt a growing pride,  
He wonder'd who that fertile mind supplied—  
'Where could the wanderer gather on his  
road

Knowledge so various ? how the mind this  
food ?

No college train'd him, guideless through his  
life,

Without a friend—not so ! he has a wife.

Ah ! had I married, I might now have seen  
My—No ! it never, never could have been :  
That long enchantment, that pernicious  
state !—

True, I recover'd, but alas ! too late—  
And here is Richard, poor indeed—but—nay !  
This is self-torment—foolish thoughts, away !

Ease leads to habit, as success to ease,  
He lives by rule who lives himself to please ;  
For change is trouble, and a man of wealth  
Consults his quiet as he guards his health ;  
And habit now on George had sovereign power,  
His actions all had their accustom'd hour :  
At the fix'd time he slept, he walk'd, he read,  
Or sought his grounds, his gruel, and his bed ;  
For every season he with caution dress'd,  
And morn and eve had the appropriate vest ;  
He talk'd of early mists, and night's cold  
air,

And in one spot was fix'd his worship's chair  
But not a custom yet on Richard's mind  
Had force, or him to certain modes confined ;  
To him no joy such frequent visits paid,  
That habit by its beaten track was made :  
He was not one who at his ease could say,  
'We'll live to-morrow as we lived to-day ;'  
But he and his were as the ravens fed,  
As the day came it brought the daily bread.

George, born to fortune, though of moder-  
ate kind,

Was not in haste his road through life to find :  
His father early lost, his mother tried  
To live without him, liked it not, and—sigh'd,  
When, for her widow'd hand, an amorous  
youth applied :

She still was young, and felt that she could  
share

A lover's passion, and an husband's care ;



Yet past twelve years before her son was told,  
To his surprise, 'your father you behold.'  
But he beheld not with his mother's eye  
The new relation, and would not comply;  
But all obedience, all connexion spurn'd,  
And fled their home, where he no more  
return'd.

His father's brother was a man whose mind  
Was to his business and his bank confined;  
His guardian care the captious nephew sought,  
And was received, caress'd, advised, and  
taught.

That Irish beggar, whom your mother  
took,

Does you this good, he sends you to your book;  
Yet love not books, beyond their proper worth;  
But when they fit you for the world, go forth:  
They are like beauties, and may blessings  
prove,

When we with caution study them, or love;  
But when to either we our souls devote,  
We grow unfitted for that world, and dote'

George to a school of higher class was sent,  
But he was ever grieving that he went:  
A still, retiring, musing, dreaming boy,  
He relish'd not their sudden bursts of joy;  
Nor the tumultuous pleasures of a rude,  
A noisy, careless, fearless multitude:  
He had his own delights, as one who flies  
From every pleasure that a crowd supplies:  
Thrice he return'd, but then was weary grown,  
And was indulged with studies of his own.

Still could the rector and his friend relate  
The small adventures of that distant date;  
And Richard listen'd as they spake of time  
Past in that world of misery and crime.

Freed from his school, a priest of gentle kind  
The uncle found to guide the nephew's mind;  
Pleased with his teacher, George so long  
remain'd,

The mind was weaken'd by the store it gain'd.  
His guardian uncle, then on foreign ground,  
No time to think of his improvements found;  
Nor had the nephew, now to manhood grown,  
Talents or taste for trade or commerce shown,  
But shunn'd a world of which he little knew,  
Nor of that little did he like the view.

His mother chose, nor I the choice upbraid,  
An Irish soldier of an house decay'd,  
And passing poor, but precious in her eyes  
As she in his; they both obtain'd a prize.  
To do the captain justice, she might share  
What of her jointure his affairs could spare:

Irish he was in his profusion—true,  
But he was Irish in affection too;  
And though he spent her wealth and made  
her grieve,  
He always said 'my dear,' and 'with your  
leave.'

Him she survived: she saw his boy possess'd  
Of manly spirit, and then sank to rest.

Her sons thus left, some legal cause required  
That they should meet, but neither this  
desired:

George, a recluse, with mind engaged, was one  
Who did no business, with whom none was  
done;

Whose heart, engross'd by its peculiar care,  
Shared no one's counsel—no one his might  
share.

Richard, a boy, a lively boy, was told  
Of his half-brother, haughty, stern, and cold;  
And his boy folly, or his manly pride,  
Made him on measures cool and harsh decide:  
So, when they met, a distant cold salute  
Was of a long-expected day the fruit;  
The rest by proxies managed, each with-  
drew,

Vex'd by the business and the brother too;  
But now they met when time had calm'd the  
mind,

Both wish'd for kindness, and it made them  
kind:

George had no wife or child, and was disposed  
To love the man on whom his hope reposed:  
Richard had both; and those so well-beloved,  
Husband and father were to kindness moved;  
And thus th' affections check'd, subdued,  
restrain'd,

Rose in their force, and in their fulness reign'd.

The bell now bids to dine: the friendly  
priest,

Social and shrewd, the day's delight increased:  
Brief and abrupt their speeches while they  
dined,

Nor were their themes of intellectual kind;  
Nor, dinner past, did they to these advance,  
But left the subjects they discuss'd to chance.

Richard, whose boyhood in the place was  
spent,

Profound attention to the speakers lent,  
Who spake of men; and, as he heard a name,  
Actors and actions to his memory came:

Then, too, the scenes he could distinctly trace,  
Here he had fought, and there had gain'd  
a race;

In that church-walk he had affrighted been,  
In that old tower he had a something seen;  
What time, dismiss'd from school, he upward  
cast

A fearful look, and trembled as he past.

No private tutor Richard's parents sought,  
Made keen by hardship, and by trouble taught;  
They might have sent him—some the counsel  
gave—

Seven gloomy winters of the North to brave,  
Where a few pounds would pay for board and  
bed,

While the poor frozen boy was taught and fed;  
When, say he lives, fair, freckled, lank and lean,  
The lad return'shrewd, subtle, close and keen;  
With all the northern virtues, and the rules  
Taught to the thrifty in these thriving schools:  
There had he gone, and borne this trying part,  
But Richard's mother had a mother's heart.

Now squire and rector were return'd to  
school,

And spoke of him who there had sovereign  
rule:

He was, it seem'd, a tyrant of the sort  
Who make the cries of tortured boys his sport;  
One of a race, if not extinguish'd, tamed,  
The flogger now is of the act ashamed;  
But this great mind all mercy's calls with-  
stood,

This Holofernes was a man of blood.

'Students,' he said, 'like horses on the road,  
Must well be lash'd before they take the load;  
They may be willing for a time to run,  
But you must whip them ere the work be done:  
To tell a boy, that, if he will improve,  
His friends will praise him, and his parents love,

Is doing nothing—he has not a doubt  
But they will love him, nay, applaud, with-  
out:

Let no fond sire a boy's ambition trust,  
To make him study, let him see he must.'

Such his opinion; and to prove it true,  
At least sincere, it was his practice too:  
Pluto they call'd him, and they named him  
well,

'Twas not an heaven where he was pleased  
to dwell:

From him a smile was like the Greenland sun,  
Surprising, nay portentous, when it shone;  
Or like the lightning, for the sudden flash  
Prepared the children for the thunder's crash.

O! had Narcissa, when she fondly kiss'd  
The weeping boy whom she to school dis-  
miss'd,

Had she beheld him shrinking from the arm  
Uplifted high to do the greater harm,  
Then seen her darling stript, and that pure  
white,

And—O! her soul had fainted at the sight;  
And with those looks that love could not  
withstand,

She would have cried, 'Barbarian, hold thy  
hand!'

In vain! no grief to this stern soul could  
speak,

No iron-tear roll down this Pluto's cheek.

Thus far they went, half earnest, half in  
jest,

Then turn'd to themes of deeper interest;  
While Richard's mind, that for awhile had  
stray'd,

Call'd home its powers, and due attention paid.

### BOOK III. BOYS AT SCHOOL

The School—School-Boys—The Boy-Tyrant  
—Sir Hector Blane—School-Boys in after  
Life how changed—how the same—The  
patronized Boy, his Life and Death—Re-  
flections—Story of Harry Bland.

We name the world a school, for day by  
day

We something learn, till we are call'd away;  
The school we name a world,—for vice and  
pain,

Fraud and contention, there begin to reign;

And much, in fact, this lesser world can  
show

Of grief and crime that in the greater grow.  
'You saw,' said George, 'in that still-hated  
school,

How the meek suffer, how the haughty rule;  
There soft, ingenuous, gentle minds endure  
Ills that ease, time, and friendship fail to  
cure:

There the best hearts, and those, who shrink  
from sin,

Find some seducing inn to draw them in;

Who takes infernal pleasure to impart  
The strongest poison to the purest heart.  
Call to your mind this scene—Yon boy  
behold :

How hot the vengeance of a heart so cold !  
See how he beats, whom he had just reviled  
And made rebellious—that imploring child :  
How fierce his eye, how merciless his blows,  
And how his anger on his insult grows ;  
You saw this Hector and his patient slave,  
Th' insulting speech, the cruel blows he gave.

' Mix'd with mankind, his interest in his  
sight,

We found this Nimrod civil and polite ;  
There was no triumph in his manner seen,  
He was so humble you might think him mean :  
Those angry passions slept till he attain'd  
His purposed wealth, and waked when that  
was gain'd ;

He then resumed the native wrath and pride,  
The more indulged, as longer laid aside ;  
Wife, children, servants, all obedience pay,  
The slaves at school no greater slaves than  
they.

No more dependant, he resumes the rein,  
And shows the school-boy turbulence again.

' Were I a poet, I would say, he brings  
To recollection some impetuous springs ;  
See ! one that issues from its humble source,  
To gain new powers, and run its noisy course ;  
Frothy and fierce among the rocks it goes,  
And threatens all that bound it or oppose :  
Till wider grown, and finding large increase,  
Though bounded still, it moves along in peace ;  
And as its waters to the ocean glide,  
They bear a busy people on its tide ;  
But there arrived, and from its channel free,  
Those swelling waters meet the mighty sea ;  
With threat'ning force the new-form'd billows  
swell,

And now affright the crowd they bore so well.'

' Yet,' said the rector, ' all these early signs  
Of vice are lost, and vice itself declines ;  
Religion counsels, troubles, sorrows rise,  
And the vile spirit in the conflict dies.

' Sir Hector Blane, the champion of the  
school,

Was very blockhead, but was form'd for rule :  
Learn he could not ; he said he could not  
learn,

But he profess'd it gave him no concern :  
Books were his horror, dinner his delight,  
And his amusement to shake hands and fight ;

Argue he could not, but in case of doubt,  
Or disputation, fairly box'd it out :

This was his logic, and his arm so strong,  
His cause prevail'd, and he was never wrong ;  
But so obtuse—you must have seen his look,  
Desponding, angry, puzzled o'er his book.

' Can you not see him on the morn that  
proved

His skill in figures ? Pluto's self was moved—  
" Come, six times five ? " th' impatient  
teacher cried ;

In vain, the pupil shut his eyes, and sigh'd.  
" Try, six times count your fingers ; how he  
stands !—

Your fingers, idiot ! "—" What, of both my  
hands ? "

' With parts like these his father felt as-  
sured,

In busy times, a ship might be procured ;  
He too was pleased to be so early freed,  
He now could fight, and he in time might read.  
So he has fought, and in his country's cause  
Has gain'd him glory, and our hearts'  
applause.

No more the blustering boy a school defies,  
We see the hero from the tyrant rise,  
And in the captain's worth the student's  
dulness dies.'

' Be all allow'd ; ' replied the squire, ' I give  
Praise to his actions ; may their glory live !  
Nay, I will hear him in his riper age  
Fight his good ship, and with the foe engage ;  
Nor will I quit him when the cowards fly,  
Although, like them, I dread his energy.

' But still, my friend, that ancient spirit  
reigns,

His powers support the credit of his brains,  
Insisting ever that he must be right,  
And for his reasons still prepared to fight.  
Let him a judge of England's prowess be,  
And all her floating terrors on the sea ;  
But this contents not, this is not denied,  
He claims a right on all things to decide ;  
A kind of patent-wisdom, and he cries,  
" 'Tis so ! " and bold the hero that denies.  
Thus the boy-spirit still the bosom rules,  
And the world's maxims were at first the  
school's.'

' No doubt,' said Jacques, ' there are in  
minds the seeds

Of good and ill, the virtues and the weeds ;  
But is it not of study the intent

This growth of evil nature to prevent ?

To check the progress of each idle shoot  
That might retard the ripening of the fruit?  
Our purpose certain! and we much effect,  
Wesomething cure, and something we correct;  
But do your utmost, when the man you see,  
You find him what you saw the boy would be,  
Disguised a little; but we still behold  
What pleased and what offended us of old.  
Years from the mind no native stain remove,  
But lay the varnish of the world above.  
Still, when he can, he loves to step aside  
And be the boy, without a check or guide;  
In the old wanderings he with pleasure strays,  
And reassumes the bliss of earlier days.

'I left at school the boy with pensive look,  
Whom some great patron order'd to his book,  
Who from his mother's cot reluctant came,  
And gave *my lord*, for this compassion, fame;  
Who, told of all his patron's merit, sigh'd,  
I know not why, in sorrow or in pride;  
And would, with vex'd and troubled spirit,  
cry,

"I am not happy; let your envy die."  
Him left I with you; who, perhaps, can tell  
If fortune bless'd him, or what fate befell:  
I yet remember how the idlers ran  
To see the carriage of the godlike man,  
When pride restrain'd me; yet I thought the  
deed

Was noble, too,—and how did it succeed?

Jacques answer'd not till he had backward  
cast

His view, and dwelt upon the evil past;  
Then, as he sigh'd, he smiled;—from folly rise  
Such smiles, and misery will create such sighs.  
And Richard now from his abstraction broke,  
Listening attentive as the rector spoke.

'This noble lord was one disposed to try  
And weigh the worth of each new luxury;  
Now, at a certain time, in pleasant mood,  
He tried the luxury of doing good;  
For this he chose a widow's handsome boy,  
Whom he would first improve, and then  
employ.

The boy was gentle, modest, civil, kind,  
But not for bustling through the world  
design'd;

Reserved in manner, with a little gloom,  
Apt to retire, but never to assume;  
Possess'd of pride that he could not subdue,  
Although he kept his origin in view.

Him sent my lord to school, and this became  
A theme for praise, and gave his lordship  
fame;

But when the boy was told how great his debt,  
He proudly ask'd, "is it contracted yet?"

'With care he studied, and with some  
success;

His patience great, but his acquirements less:  
Yet when he heard that Charles would not  
excel,

His lordship answer'd, with a smile, "'tis well;  
Let him proceed, and do the best he can,  
I want no pedant, but a useful man."

'The speech was heard, and praise was  
amply dealt,

His lordship felt it, and he said he felt—  
"It is delightful," he observed, "to raise  
And foster merit,—it is more than praise."

'Five years at school th' industrious boy  
had past,

"And what," was whisper'd, "will be done  
at last?"

My lord was troubled, for he did not mean  
To have his bounty watch'd and overseen;  
Bounty that sleeps when men applaud no  
more,

The generous act that waked their praise  
before;

The deed was pleasant while the praise was  
new,

But none the progress would with wonder  
view:

It was a debt contracted; he who pays  
A debt is just, but must not look for praise:  
The deed that once had fame must still  
proceed,

Though fame no more proclaims "how great  
the deed!"

The boy is taken from his mother's side,  
And he who took him must be now his guide.  
But this, alas! instead of bringing fame,  
A tax, a trouble, to my lord became.

"The boy is dull, you say,—why then by  
trade,

By law, by physic, nothing can be made;  
If a small living—mine are both too large,  
And then the college is a cursed charge:  
The sea is open; should he there display  
Signs of dislike, he cannot run away."

'Now Charles, who acted no heroic part,  
And felt no seaman's glory warm his heart,  
Refused the offer—anger touch'd my lord.—  
"He does not like it—Good, upon my word—

If I at college place him, he will need  
Supplies for ever, and will not succeed ;—  
Doubtless in me 'tis duty to provide  
Not for his comfort only, but his pride—  
Let him to sea ! ”—He heard the words again,  
With promise join'd—with threat'ning ; all  
in vain :

Charles had his own pursuits ; for aid to these  
He had been thankful, and had tried to please ;  
But urged again, as meekly as a saint,  
He humbly begg'd to stay at home, and  
paint.

“ Yes, pay some dauber, that this stubborn  
fool

May grind his colours, and may boast his  
school.”

‘ As both persisted, “ Choose, good sir,  
your way.”

The peer exclaim'd, “ I have no more to say.  
I seek your good, but I have no command  
Upon your will, nor your desire withstand.”

‘ Resolved and firm, yet dreading to offend,  
Charles pleaded *genius* with his noble friend :  
“ *Genius !* ” he cried, “ the name that triflers  
give

To their strong wishes without pains to live ;  
*Genius !* the plea of all who feel desire  
Of fame, yet grudge the labours that acquire :  
But say 'tis true ; how poor, how late the  
gain,

And certain ruin if the hope be vain ! ”  
Then to the world appeal'd my lord, and cried,  
“ Whatever happens, I am justified.”

Nay, it was trouble to his soul to find  
There was such hardness in the human mind :  
He wash'd his hands before the world, and  
swore

That he “ such minds would patronize no  
more.”

‘ Now Charles his bread by daily labours  
sought,

And this his solace, “ so *Corregio* wrought.”  
Alas, poor youth ! however great his name,  
And humble thine, thy fortune was the same :  
Charles drew and painted, and some praise  
obtain'd

For care and pains ; but little more was gain'd :  
Fame was his hope, and he contempt display'd  
For approbation, when 'twas coolly paid :  
His daily tasks he call'd a waste of mind,  
Vex'd at his fate, and angry with mankind :  
“ Thus have the blind to merit ever done,  
And *Genius* mourn'd for each neglected son.”

‘ Charles murmur'd thus, and angry and  
alone

Half breathed the curse, and half suppress'd  
the groan ;

Then still more sullen grew, and still more  
proud,

Fame so refused he to himself allow'd,  
Crowds in contempt he held, and all to him  
was crowd.

‘ If aught on earth, the youth his mother  
loved,

And, at her death, to distant scenes removed.

‘ Years past away, and where he lived, and  
how,

Was then unknown—indeed we know not  
now ;

But once at twilight walking up and down,  
In a poor alley of the mighty town,

Where, in her narrow courts and garrets, hide  
The grieving sons of genius, want, and pride,

I met him musing : sadness I could trace,  
And conquer'd hope's meek anguish, in his face.

See him I must : but I with ease address'd,  
And neither pity nor surprise express'd ;

I strove both grief and pleasure to restrain,  
But yet I saw that I was giving pain.

He said, with quick'ning pace, as loth to hold  
A longer converse, that “ the day was cold,

That he was well, that I had scarcely light  
To aid my steps,” and bade me then good  
night !

‘ I saw him next where he had lately come,  
A silent pauper in a crowded room ;

I heard his name, but he conceal'd his face,  
To his sad mind his misery was disgrace :

In vain I strove to combat his disdain  
Of my compassion——“ Sir, I pray refrain ; ”

For I had left my friends and stepp'd aside,  
Because I fear'd his unrelenting pride.

‘ He then was sitting on a workhouse-bed,  
And on the naked boards reclined his head,

Around were children with incessant cry,  
And near was one, like him, about to die ;

A broken chair's deal bottom held the store  
That he required—he soon would need no  
more ;

A yellow tea-pot, standing at his side,  
From its half spout the cold black tea sup-  
plied.

‘ Hither, it seem'd, the fainting man was  
brought,

Found without food,—it was no longer  
sought :

For his employers knew not whom they paid,  
Nor where to seek him whom they wish'd to  
aid :

Here brought, some kind attendant he  
address'd,

And sought some trifles which he yet pos-  
sess'd ;

Then named a lightless closet, in a room  
Hired at small rate, a garret's deepest gloom.  
They sought the region, and they brought  
him all

That he his own, his proper wealth could call :  
A better coat, less pieced ; some linen neat,  
Not whole ; and papers many a valued sheet ;  
Designs and drawings ; these, at his desire,  
Were placed before him at the chamber fire,  
And while th' admiring people stood to gaze,  
He, one by one, committed to the blaze,  
Smiling in spleen ; but one he held awhile,  
And gave it to the flames, and could not smile.

'The sickening man—for such appear'd  
the fact—

Just in his need, would not a debt contract ;  
But left his poor apartment for the bed  
That earth might yield him, or some way-  
side shed ;

Here he was found, and to this place convey'd,  
Where he might rest, and his last debt be paid :  
Fame was his wish, but he so far from fame,  
That no one knew his kindred, or his name,  
Or by what means he lived, or from what  
place he came.

'Poor Charles ! unnoticed by thy titled  
friend,

Thy days had calmly past, in peace thine end :  
Led by thy patron's vanity astray,  
Thy own misled thee in thy trackless way,  
Urging thee on by hope absurd and vain,  
Where never peace or comfort smiled again !

'Once more I saw him, when his spirits fail'd,  
And my desire to aid him then prevail'd ;  
He show'd a softer feeling in his eye,  
And watch'd my looks, and own'd the  
sympathy :

'Twas now the calm of wearied pride ; so long  
As he had strength was his resentment strong,  
But in such place, with strangers all around,  
And they such strangers, to have something  
found

Allied to his own heart, an early friend,  
One, only one, who would on him attend,  
To give and take a look ! at this his journey's  
end ;

One link, however slender, of the chain  
That held him where he could not long  
remain ;

The one sole interest !—No, he could not now  
Retain his anger ; Nature knew not how ;  
And so there came a softness to his mind,  
And he forgave the usage of mankind.

His cold long fingers now were press'd to mine,  
And his faint smile of kinder thoughts gave  
sign ;

His lips moved often as he tried to lend  
His words their sound, and softly whisper'd  
" friend ! "

Not without comfort in the thought express'd  
By that calm look with which he sank to rest.'

'The man,' said George, 'you see, through  
life retain'd

The boy's defects ; his virtues too remain'd.

'But where are now those minds so light  
and gay,

So forced on study, so intent on play,  
Swept, by the world's rude blasts, from hope's  
dear views away ?

Some grieved for long neglect in earlier times,  
Some sad from frailties, some lamenting  
crimes ;

Thinking, with sorrow, on the season lent  
For noble purpose, and in trifling spent ;  
And now, at last, when they in earnest view  
The nothings done—what work they find to  
do !

Where is that virtue that the generous boy  
Felt, and resolved that nothing should de-  
stroy ?

He who with noble indignation glow'd  
When vice had triumph ? who his tear  
bestow'd

On injured merit ? he who would possess  
Power, but to aid the children of distress !  
Who has such joy in generous actions shown,  
And so sincere, they might be call'd his own ;  
Knight, hero, patriot, martyr ! on whose  
tongue,

And potent arm, a nation's welfare hung ;  
He who to public misery brought relief,  
And soothed the anguish of domestic grief.  
Where now this virtue's fervour, spirit, zeal ?  
Who felt so warmly, has he ceased to feel ?  
The boy's emotions of that noble kind,  
Ah ! sure th' experienced man has not  
resign'd ;

Or are these feelings varied ? has the knight,  
 Virtue's own champion, now refused to fight ?  
 Is the deliverer turn'd th' oppressor now ?  
 Has the reformer dropt the dangerous vow ?  
 Or has the patriot's bosom lost its heat,  
 And forced him, shivering, to a snug retreat ?  
 Is such the grievous lapse of human pride ?  
 Is such the victory of the worth untried ?

' Here will I pause, and then review the shame

Of Harry Bland, to hear his parent's name ;  
 That mild, that modest boy, whom well we knew,

In him long time the secret sorrow grew ;  
 He wept alone ; then to his friend confess'd  
 The grievous fears that his pure mind oppress'd ;

And thus, when terror o'er his shame obtain'd  
 A painful conquest, he his case explain'd :  
 And first his favourite question'd—" Willie, tell,

Do all the wicked people go to hell ? "

' Willie with caution answer'd, " Yes, they do,

Or else repent ; but what is this to you ? "  
 " O ! yes, dear friend : " he then his tale began—

He fear'd his father was a wicked man,  
 Nor had repented of his naughty life ;  
 The wife he had indeed was not a wife,  
 Not as my mother was ; the servants all  
 Call her a name—I'll whisper what they call.

She saw me weep, and ask'd, in high disdain,  
 If tears could bring my mother back again ?  
 This I could bear, but not when she pretends  
 Such fond regard, and what I speak commends ;

Talks of my learning, fawning wretch ! and tries

To make me love her,—love ! when I despise.  
 Indeed I had it in my heart to say  
 Words of reproach, before I came away ;  
 And then my father's look is not the same,  
 He puts his anger on to hide his shame.

' With all these feelings delicate and nice,  
 This dread of infamy, this scorn of vice,  
 He left the school, accepting, though with pride,

His father's aid—but there would not reside ;  
 He married then a lovely maid, approved  
 Of every heart as worthy to be loved ;

Mild as the morn in summer, firm as truth,  
 And graced with wisdom in the bloom of youth.

' How is it, men, when they in judgment sit  
 On the same fault, now censure, now acquit ?  
 Is it not thus, that *here* we view the sin,  
 And *there* the powerful cause that drew us in ?  
 'Tis not that men are to the evil blind,  
 But that a different object fills the mind.  
 In judging others we can see too well  
 Their grievous fall, but not how grieved they fell ;

Judging ourselves, we to our minds recall,  
 Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall.

' Or could this man, so vex'd in early time,  
 By this strong feeling for his father's crime,  
 Who to the parent's sin was barely just,  
 And mix'd with filial fear the man's disgust ;  
 Could he, without some strong delusion, quit  
 The path of duty, and to shame submit ?  
 Cast off the virtue he so highly prized,

" And be the very creature he despised ? "

' A tenant's wife, half forward, half afraid,  
 Features, it seem'd, of powerful cast display'd,  
 That bore down faith and duty ; common fame

Speaks of a contract that augments the shame.

' There goes he, not unseen, so strong the will,

And blind the wish, that bear him to the mill ;  
 There he degraded sits, and strives to please  
 The miller's children, laughing at his knees ;  
 And little Dorcas, now familiar grown,  
 Talks of her rich papa, and of her own.

He woos the mother's now precarious smile  
 By costly gifts, that tempers reconcile ;  
 While the rough husband, yielding to the pay  
 That buys his absence, growling stalks away.  
 'Tis said th' offending man will sometimes sigh,

And say, " My God, in what a dream am I ?  
 I will awake : " but, as the day proceeds,  
 The weaken'd mind the day's indulgence needs ;

Hating himself at every step he takes,  
 His mind approves the virtue he forsakes,  
 And yet forsakes her. O ! how sharp the pain,  
 Our vice, ourselves, our habits to disdain ;  
 To go where never yet in peace we went,  
 To feel our hearts can bleed, yet not relent ;  
 To sigh, yet not recede ; to grieve, yet not  
 repent ! '

## BOOK IV. ADVENTURES OF RICHARD

Meeting of the Brothers in the Morning—  
 Pictures, Music, Books—The Autumnal  
 Walk—The Farm—The Flock—Effect of  
 Retirement upon the Mind—Dinner—  
 Richard's Adventure at Sea—George in-  
 quires into the Education of his Brother—  
 Richard's account of his Occupations in his  
 early Life; his Pursuits, Associations, Par-  
 tialities, Affections, and Feelings—His Love  
 of Freedom—The Society he chose—The  
 Friendships he engaged in—and the Habits  
 he contracted.

EIGHT days had past; the Brothers now  
 could meet

With ease, and take the customary seat.

'These,' said the host, for he perceived  
 where stray'd

His brother's eye, and what he now survey'd;  
 'These are the costly trifles that we buy,  
 Urged by the strong demands of vanity,  
 The thirst and hunger of a mind diseased,  
 That must with purchased flattery be  
 appeased;

But yet, 'tis true, the things that you behold  
 Serve to amuse us as we're getting old:  
 These pictures, as I heard our artists say,  
 Are genuine all, and I believe they may;  
 They cost the genuine sums, and I should  
 grieve

If, being willing, I could not believe.  
 And there is music; when the ladies come,  
 With their keen looks they scrutinize the room  
 To see what pleases, and I must expect  
 To yield them pleasure, or to find neglect:  
 For, as attractions from our person fly,  
 Our purses, Richard, must the want supply;  
 Yet would it vex me could the triflers know  
 That they can shut out comfort or bestow.

'But see this room: here, Richard, you will  
 find

Books for all palates, food for every mind;  
 This readers term the ever-new delight,  
 And so it is, if minds have appetite:  
 Mine once was craving; great my joy, in-  
 deed,

Had I possess'd such food when I could feed;  
 When at the call of every new-born wish  
 I could have keenly relish'd every dish—

Now, Richard, now, I stalk around and look  
 Upon the dress and title of a book,  
 Try half a page, and then can taste no more,  
 But the dull volume to its place restore;  
 Begin a second slowly to peruse,  
 Then cast it by, and look about for news  
 The news itself grows dull in long debates,—  
 I skip, and see what the conclusion states;  
 And many a speech, with zeal and study made  
 Cold and resisting spirits to persuade,  
 Is lost on mine; alone, we cease to feel  
 What crowds admire, and wonder at their  
 zeal.

'But how the day? No fairer will it be?  
 Walk you? Alas! 'tis requisite for me—  
 Nay, let me not prescribe—my friends and  
 guests are free.'

It was a fair and mild autumnal sky,  
 And earth's ripe treasures met th' admiring  
 eye,

As a rich beauty, when her bloom is lost,  
 Appears with more magnificence and cost:  
 The wet and heavy grass, where feet had  
 stray'd,

Not yet erect, the wanderer's way betray'd;  
 Showers of the night had swell'd the deep'ning  
 rill,

The morning breeze had urged the quick'ning  
 mill;

Assembled rooks had wing'd their sea-ward  
 flight,

By the same passage to return at night,  
 While proudly o'er them hung the steady kite,  
 Then turn'd him back, and left the noisy  
 throng,

Nor deign'd to know them as he sail'd along.  
 Long yellow leaves, from ozers, strew'd  
 around,

Choked the small stream, and hush'd the  
 feeble sound;

While the dead foliage dropt from loftier trees  
 Our squire beheld not with his wonted ease,  
 But to his own reflections made reply,  
 And said aloud, 'Yes! doubtless we must  
 die.'

'We must;' said Richard, 'and we would  
 not live

To feel what dotage and decay will give;



But we yet taste whatever we behold,  
The morn is lovely, though the air is cold :  
There is delicious quiet in this scene,  
At once so rich, so varied, so serene ;  
Sounds too delight us,—each discordant tone  
Thus mingled please, that fail to please alone ;  
This hollow wind, this rustling of the brook,  
The farm-yard noise, the woodman at yon oak—

See, the axe falls !—now listen to the stroke !  
That gun itself, that murders all this peace,  
Adds to the charm, because it soon must cease.

‘ No doubt,’ said George, ‘ the country has its charms !

My farm behold ! the model for all farms !  
Look at that land—you find not there a weed,  
We grub the roots, and suffer none to seed.

‘ To land like this no botanist will come,  
To seek the precious ware he hides at home ;  
Pressing the leaves and flowers with effort nice,

As if they came from herbs in Paradise ;  
Let them their favourites with my neighbours see,  
They have no—what ?—no *habitat* with me.

‘ Now see my flock, and hear its glory ;—  
none

Have that vast body and that slender bone ;  
They are the village boast, the dealer’s theme,  
Fleece of such staple ! flesh in such esteem !’

‘ Brother,’ said Richard, ‘ do I hear aright ?  
Does the land truly give so much delight ?’

‘ So says my bailiff: sometimes I have tried  
To catch the joy, but nature has denied ;  
It will not be—the mind has had a store  
Laid up for life, and will admit no more :  
Worn out in trials, and about to die,  
In vain to these we for amusement fly ;  
We farm, we garden, we our poor employ,  
And much command, though little we enjoy ;  
Or, if ambitious, we employ our pen,  
We plant a desert, or we drain a fen ;  
And—here, behold my medal !—this will show  
What men may merit when they nothing know.’

‘ Yet reason here,’ said Richard, ‘ joins  
with pride :—’

‘ I did not ask th’ alliance,’ George replied—  
‘ I grant it true, such trifle may induce  
A dull, proud man to wake and be of use ;  
And there are purer pleasures, that a mind  
Calm and uninjured may in villas find ;

But where th’ affections have been deeply  
tried,

With other food that mind must be supplied :  
’Tis not in trees or medals to impart  
The powerful medicine for an aching heart ;  
The agitation dies, but there is still  
The backward spirit, the resisting will.  
Man takes his body to a country seat,  
But minds, dear Richard, have their own  
retreat ;

Off when the feet are pacing o’er the green  
The mind is gone where never grass was seen,  
And never thinks of hill, or vale, or plain,  
Till want of rest creates a sense of pain,  
That calls that wandering mind, and brings  
it home again.

No more of farms : but here I boast of minds  
That make a friend the richer when he finds ;  
These shalt thou see ;—but, Richard, be it  
known,

Who thinks to see must in his turn be  
shown :—

But now farewell ! to thee will I resign  
Woods, walks, and valleys ! take them till  
we dine.’

The Brothers dined, and with that plenteous  
fare

That seldom fails to dissipate our care,  
At least the lighter kind ; and oft prevails  
When reason, duty, nay, when kindness fails.  
Yet food and wine, and all that mortals bless,  
Lead them to think of peril and distress ;  
Cold, hunger, danger, solitude, and pain,  
That men in life’s adventurous ways sustain.

‘ Thou hast sail’d far, dear brother,’ said  
the squire—

‘ Permit me of these unknown lands t’ inquire,  
Lands never till’d, where thou hast wondering  
been.

And all the marvels thou hast heard and seen :  
Do tell me something of the miseries felt  
In climes where travellers freeze, and where  
they melt ;

And be not nice,—we know ’tis not in men,  
Who travel far, to hold a steady pen :  
Some will, ’tis true, a bolder freedom take,  
And keep our wonder always wide awake ;  
We know of those whose dangers far exceed  
Our frail belief, that trembles as we read ;  
Such as in deserts burn, and thirst, and die,  
Save a last gasp that they recover by :

Then, too, their hazard from a tyrant's arms,  
A tiger's fury, or a lady's charms;  
Beside th' accumulated evils borne  
From the bold outset to the safe return.

These men abuse; but thou hast fair pretence  
To modest dealing, and to mild good sense;  
Then let me hear thy struggles and escapes  
In the far lands of crocodiles and apes:  
Say, hast thou, Bruce-like, knelt upon the bed  
Where the young Nile uplifts his branchy head?  
Or been partaker of th' unhallow'd feast,  
Where beast-like man devours his fellow  
beast,

And churn'd the bleeding life? while each  
great dame

And sovereign beauty bade adieu to shame?  
Or did the storm, that thy wreck'd pinnacle  
bore,

Impel thee gasping on some unknown shore;  
Where, when thy beard and nails were savage  
grown,

Some swarthy princess took thee for her own,  
Some danger-dreading Yarico, who, kind,  
Sent thee away, and, prudent, staid behind?

'Come—I am ready wonders to receive,  
Prone to assent, and willing to believe.'

Richard replied: 'It must be known, to you,  
That tales improbable may yet be true;  
And yet it is a foolish thing to tell  
A tale that shall be judged improbable;  
While some impossibilities appear  
So like the truth, that we assenting hear:  
Yet, with your leave, I venture to relate  
A chance-affair, and fact alone will state;  
Though, I confess, it may suspicion breed,  
And you may cry, "Improbable, indeed!"

'When first I tried the sea, I took a trip,  
But duty none, in a relation's ship;  
Thus, unengaged, I felt my spirits light,  
Kept care at distance, and put fear to flight;  
Oft this same spirit in my friends prevail'd,  
Buoyant in dangers, rising when assail'd;  
When, as the gale at evening died away,  
And die it will with the retiring day,  
Impatient then, and sick of very ease,  
We loudly whistled for the slumbering breeze.

'One eve it came; and, frantic in my joy,  
I rose and danced, as idle as a boy:  
The cabin-lights were down, that we might  
learn

A trifling something from the ship astern;

The stiffening gale bore up the growing wave,  
And wilder motion to my madness gave:  
Oft have I since, when thoughtful and at rest,  
Believed some maddening power my mind  
possess'd;

For, in an instant, as the stern sank low,  
(How moved I knew not—What can madness  
know?)

Chance that direction to my motion gave,  
And plunged me headlong in the roaring wave:  
Swift flew the parting ship,—the fainter light  
Withdrew,—or horror took them from my  
sight.

'All was confused above, beneath, around;  
All sounds of terror; no distinguish'd sound  
Could reach me, now on sweeping surges tost,  
And then between the rising billows lost;  
An undefined sensation stopp'd my breath;  
Disorder'd views and threat'ning signs of death  
Met in one moment, and a terror gave—  
I cannot paint it—to the moving grave.

My thoughts were all distressing, hurried,  
mix'd,

On all things fixing, not a moment fix'd:  
Vague thoughts of instant danger brought  
their pain,

New hopes of safety banish'd them again;  
Then the swoll' billow all these hopes  
destroy'd,

And left me sinking in the mighty void:  
Weaker I grew, and grew the more dismay'd,  
Of aid all hopeless, yet in search of aid;  
Struggling awhile upon the wave to keep,  
Then, languid, sinking in the yawning deep:  
So tost, so lost, so sinking in despair,  
I pray'd in heart an indirected prayer,  
And then once more I gave my eyes to view  
The ship now lost, and bade the light adieu!  
From my chill'd frame th' enfeebled spirit fled,  
Rose the tall billows round my deep'ning bed,  
Cold seized my heart, thought ceased, and  
I was dead.

'Brother, I have not,—man has not the  
power

To paint the horrors of that life-long hour;  
Hour!—but of time I knew not—when I  
found

Hope, youth, life, love, and all they pro-  
mised, drown'd;

When all so indistinct, so undefined,  
So dark and dreadful, overcame the mind;  
When such confusion on the spirit dwelt,  
That, feeling much, it knew not what it felt.

'Can I, my brother—ought I to forget  
That night of terror? No! it threatens yet.  
Shall I days, months—nay, years, indeed,  
neglect,

Who then could feel what moments must effect,  
Were aught effected? who, in that wild  
storm,

Found there was nothing I could well per-  
form;

For what to us are moments, what are hours,  
If lost our judgment, and confused our  
powers?

'Oft in the times when passion strives to  
reign,

When duty feebly holds the slacken'd chain,  
When reason slumbers, then remembrance  
draws

This view of death, and folly makes a pause—  
The view o'ercomes the vice, the fear the  
frenzy awes.

'I know there wants not this to make it  
true,

What danger bids be done, in safety do;  
Yet such escapes may make our purpose sure,  
Who slights such warning may be too secure.'

'But the escape!—'Whate'er they judged  
might save

Their sinking friend they cast upon the wave;  
Something of these my heaven-directed arm  
Unconscious seized, and held as by a charm:  
The crew astern beheld me as I swam,  
And I am saved—O! let me say I am.'

'Brother,' said George, 'I have neglected  
long

To think of all thy perils:—it was wrong;  
But do forgive me; for I could not be  
Than of myself more negligent of thee.

Now tell me, Richard, from the boyish years  
Of thy young mind, that now so rich appears,  
How was it stored? 'twas told me, thou wert  
wild,

A truant urchin,—a neglected child.  
I heard of this escape, and sat supine  
Amid the danger that exceeded thine;  
Thou couldst but die—the waves could but  
infold

Thy warm gay heart, and make that bosom  
cold—

While I—but no! Proceed, and give me  
truth;

How past the years of thy unguided youth?

Thy father left thee to the care of one  
Who could not teach, could ill support a son;  
Yet time and trouble feeble minds have  
stay'd,

And fit for long-neglected duties made:  
I see thee struggling in the world, as late  
Within the waves, and with an equal fate,  
By Heaven preserved—but tell me, whence  
and how

Thy gleanings came?—a dexterous gleaner  
thou!

'Left by that father, who was known to  
few,

And to that mother, who has not her due  
Of honest fame,' said Richard, 'our retreat  
Was a small cottage, for our station meet,  
On Barford Downs: that mother, fond and  
poor,

There taught some truths, and bade me seek  
for more,

Such as our village-school and books a few  
Supplied; but such I cared not to pursue;  
I sought the town, and to the ocean gave  
My mind and thoughts, as restless as the wave:  
Where crowds assembled, I was sure to run,  
Hear what was said, and mused on what was  
done;

Attentive listening in the moving scene,  
And often wondering what the men could  
mean.

When ships at sea made signals of their need,  
I watch'd on shore the sailors, and their speed:  
Mix'd in their act, nor rested till I knew  
Why they were call'd, and what they were  
to do.

'Whatever business in the port was done,  
I, without call, was with the busy one;  
Not daring question, but with open ear  
And greedy spirit, ever bent to hear.

'To me the wives of seamen loved to tell  
What storms endanger'd men esteem'd so  
well;

What wondrous things in foreign parts they  
saw,  
Lands without bounds, and people without  
law.

'No ships were wreck'd upon that fatal  
beach,

But I could give the luckless tale of each;  
Eager I look'd, till I beheld a face  
Of one disposed to paint their dismal case;  
Who gave the sad survivors' doleful tale,  
From the first brushing of the mighty gale

Until they struck ; and, suffering in their fate,  
 I long'd the more they should its horrors state ;  
 While some, the fond of pity, would enjoy  
 The earnest sorrows of the feeling boy.  
 I sought the men return'd from regions cold,  
 The frozen straits, where icy mountains roll'd ;  
 Some I could win to tell me serious tales  
 Of boats uplifted by enormous whales,  
 Or, when harpoon'd, how swiftly through the  
 sea

The wounded monsters with the cordage flee ;  
 Yet some uneasy thoughts assail'd me then,  
 The monsters warr'd not with, nor wounded  
 men :

The smaller fry we take, with scales and fins,  
 Who gasp and die—this adds not to our sins ;  
 But so much blood ! warm life, and frames so  
 large

To strike, to murder—seem'd an heavy  
 charge.

' They told of days, where many goes to  
 one—

Such days as ours ; and how a larger sun,  
 Red, but not flaming, roll'd, with motion slow,  
 On the world's edge, and never dropt below.

' There were fond girls, who took me to  
 their side

To tell the story how their lovers died ;  
 They praised my tender heart, and bade me  
 prove

Both kind and constant when I came to love.  
 In fact, I lived for many an idle year  
 In fond pursuit of agitations dear ;  
 For ever seeking, ever pleased to find,  
 The food I loved, I thought not of its kind ;  
 It gave affliction while it brought delight,  
 And joy and anguish could at once excite.

' One gusty day, now stormy and now still,  
 I stood apart upon the western hill,  
 And saw a race at sea : a gun was heard,  
 And two contending boats in sail appear'd :  
 Equal awhile ; then one was left behind,  
 And for a moment had her chance resign'd,  
 When, in that moment, up a sail they drew—  
 Not used before—their rivals to pursue.  
 Strong was the gale ! in hurry now there  
 came

Men from the town, their thoughts, their  
 fears the same ;

And women too ! affrighted maids and wives,  
 All deeply feeling for their sailors' lives.

' The strife continued ; in a glass we saw  
 The desperate efforts, and we stood in awe,

When the last boat shot suddenly before,  
 Then fill'd, and sank—and could be seen no  
 more !

' Then were those piercing shrieks, that  
 frantic flight,

All hurried ! all in tumult and affright !  
 A gathering crowd from different streets drew  
 near,

All ask, all answer—none attend, none hear !

' One boat is safe ; and see ! she backs her  
 sail

To save the sinking—Will her care avail ?

' O ! how impatient on the sands we tread,  
 And the winds roaring, and the women led,  
 As up and down they pace with frantic air,  
 And scorn a comforter, and will despair ;  
 They know not who in either boat is gone,  
 But think the father, husband, lover, one.

' And who is she apart ? She dares not come  
 To join the crowd, yet cannot rest at home :  
 With what strong interest looks she at the  
 waves,

Meeting and clashing o'er the seamen's graves:  
 'Tis a poor girl betroth'd—a few hours more,  
 And *he* will lie a corpse upon the shore.

' Strange, that a boy could love these scenes,  
 and cry

In very pity—but that boy was I.

With pain my mother would my tales receive,  
 And say, " my Richard, do not learn to  
 grieve."

One wretched hour had past before we knew  
 Whom they had saved ! Alas ! they were  
 but two,

An orphan'd lad and widow'd man—no more !  
 And they unnoticed stood upon the shore,  
 With scarce a friend to greet them—widows  
 view'd

This man and boy, and then their cries  
 renew'd :—

'Twas long before the signs of wo gave place  
 To joy again ; grief sat on every face.

' Sure of my mother's kindness, and the joy  
 She felt in meeting her rebellious boy,  
 I at my pleasure our new seat forsook,  
 And, undirected, these excursions took :  
 I often rambled to the noisy quay,  
 Strange sounds to hear, and business strange  
 to me ;

Seamen and carmen, and I know not who,  
 A lewd, amphibious, rude, contentious crew—  
 Confused as bees appear about their hive,  
 Yet all alert to keep their work alive.

'Here, unobserved as weed upon the wave,  
My whole attention to the scene I gave;  
I saw their tasks, their toil, their care, their  
skill,

Led by their own and by a master-will;  
And though contending, toiling, tugging on,  
The purposed business of the day was done.

'The open shops of craftsmen caught my  
eye,

And there my questions met the kind reply:  
Men, when alone, will teach; but, in a crowd,  
The child is silent, or the man is proud;  
But, by themselves, there is attention paid  
To a mild boy, so forward, yet afraid.

'I made me interest at the inn's fire-side,  
Amid the scenes to bolder boys denied;  
For I had patrons there, and I was one,  
They judged, who noticed nothing that was  
done.

"A quiet lad!" would my protector say;  
"To him, now, this is better than his play:  
Boys are as men; some active, shrewd, and  
keen,

They look about if aught is to be seen;  
And some, like Richard here, have not a mind  
That takes a notice—but the lad is kind."

'I loved in summer on the heath to walk,  
And seek the shepherd—shepherds love to  
talk:

His superstition was of ranker kind,  
And he with tales of wonder stored my mind;

'Wonders that he in many a lonely eve  
Had seen, himself, and therefore must believe.  
His boy, his Joe, he said, from duty ran,  
Took to the sea, and grew a fearless man:  
"On yonder knoll—the sheep were in the  
fold—

His spirit past me, shivering-like and cold!  
I felt a fluttering, but I knew not how,  
And heard him utter, like a whisper, 'now!'  
Soon came a letter from a friend—to tell  
That he had fallen, and the time he fell."

'Even to the smugglers' hut the rocks  
between,

I have, adventurous in my wandering, been:  
Poor, pious Martha served the lawless tribe,  
And could their merits and their faults  
describe;

Adding her thoughts; "I talk, my child, to you,  
Who little think of what such wretches do."

'I loved to walk where none had walk'd  
before,

About the rocks that ran along the shore;

Or far beyond the sight of men to stray,  
And take my pleasure when I lost my  
way;

For then 'twas mine to trace the hilly heath,  
And all the mossy moor that lies beneath:  
Here had I favourite stations, where I stood  
And heard the murmurs of the ocean-flood,  
With not a sound beside, except when flew  
Aloft the lapwing, or the gray curlew,  
Who with wild notes my fancied power defied,  
And mock'd the dreams of solitary pride.

'I loved to stop at every creek and bay  
Made by the river in its winding way,  
And call to memory—not by marks they bare,  
But by the thoughts that were created there.

'Pleasant it was to view the sea-gulls strive  
Against the storm, or in the ocean dive,  
With eager scream, or when they dropping  
gave

Their closing wings to sail upon the wave:  
Then as the winds and waters raged around,  
And breaking billows mix'd their deafening  
sound,

They on the rolling deep securely hung,  
And calmly rode the restless waves among.  
Nor pleased it less around me to behold,  
Far up the beach, the yesty sea-foam roll'd;  
Or from the shore upborn, to see on high,  
Its frothy flakes in wild confusion fly:

While the salt spray that clashing billows  
form,

Gave to the taste a feeling of the storm.

'Thus, with my favourite views, for many  
an hour

Have I indulged the dreams of princely  
power;

When the mind, wearied by excursions bold,  
The fancy jaded, and the bosom cold,  
Or when those wants, that will on kings  
intrude,

Or evening-fears, broke in on solitude;  
When I no more my fancy could employ,  
I left in haste what I could not enjoy,  
And was my gentle mother's welcome boy.

'But now thy walk,—this soft autumnal  
gloom

Bids no delay—at night I will resume  
My subject, showing, not how I improved  
In my strange school, but what the things  
I loved,

My first-born friendships, ties by forms  
uncheck'd,

And all that boys acquire whom men neglect.'

## BOOK V. RUTH

Richard resumes his Narrative—Visits a Family in a Seaport—The Man and his Wife—Their Dwelling—Books, Number and Kind—The Friendship contracted—Employment there—Hannah, the Wife, her Manner; open Mirth and latent Grief—She gives the Story of Ruth, her Daughter—Of Thomas, a Sailor—Their Affection—A Press-gang—Reflections—Ruth disturbed in Mind—A Teacher sent to comfort her—His Fondness—Her Reception of him—Her Supplication—Is refused—She deliberates—Is decided.

RICHARD would wait till George the tale should ask,

Nor waited long—He then resumed the task.

'South in the port, and eastward in the street,

Rose a small dwelling, my beloved retreat,  
Where lived a pair, then old; the sons had fled

The home they fill'd: a part of them were dead;

Married a part; while some at sea remain'd,  
And stillness in the seaman's mansion reign'd;

Lord of some petty craft, by night and day,  
The man had fish'd each fathom of the bay.

'My friend the matron woo'd me, quickly won,

To fill the station of an absent son;  
(Him whom at school I knew, and Peter known,

I took his home and mother for my own):  
I read, and doubly was I paid to hear

Events that fell upon no listless ear:  
She grieved to say her parents could neglect

Her education!—'twas a sore defect;  
She, who had ever such a vast delight

To learn, and now could neither read nor write:

But hear she could, and from our stores I took,  
Librarian meet! at her desire, our book.

Full twenty volumes—I would not exceed  
The modest truth—were there for me to read;

These a long shelf contain'd, and they were found

Books truly speaking, volumes fairly bound;  
The rest,—for some of other kinds remain'd,

And these a board beneath the shelf contain'd,—

Had their deficiencies in part; they lack'd  
One side or both, or were no longer back'd;  
But now became degraded from their place,  
And were but pamphlets of a bulkier race.  
Yet had we pamphlets, an inviting store,  
From sixpence downwards—nay, a part were more;

Learning abundance, and the various kinds  
For relaxation—food for different minds;  
A piece of Wingate—thanks for all we have—  
What we of figures needed, fully gave;  
Culpepper, new in numbers, cost but thrice  
The ancient volume's unassuming price,  
But told what planet o'er each herb had power,

And how to take it in the lucky hour.

'History we had—wars, treasons, treaties, crimes,

From Julius Caesar to the present times;  
Questions and answers, teaching what to ask

And what reply,—a kind, laborious task;  
A scholar's book it was, who, giving, swore

It held the whole he wish'd to know, and more.  
'And we had poets, hymns and songs

divine;  
The most we read not, but allow'd them fine.

'Our tracts were many, on the boldest themes—

We had our metaphysics, spirits, dreams,  
Visions and warnings, and portentous sights

Seen, though but dimly, in the doleful nights,  
When the good wife her wintry vigil keeps,

And thinks alone of him at sea, and weeps.  
'Add to all these our works in single sheets,

That our Cassandras sing about the streets:  
These, as I read, the grave good man would

say,  
'Nay, Hannah!' and she answer'd 'What

is Nay?

What is there, pray, so hurtful in a song?  
It is our fancy only makes it wrong;

His purer mind no evil thoughts alarm,  
And innocence protects him like a charm."

Then would the matron, when the song had past,

And her laugh over, ask an hymn at last;  
To the coarse jest she would attention lend,

And to the pious psalm in reverence bend:  
She gave her every power and all her mind  
As chance directed, or as taste inclined.

'More of our learning I will now omit,  
We had our Cyclopaedias of Wit,  
And all our works, rare fate, were to our  
genius fit.

'When I had read, and we were weary  
grown

Of other minds, the dame disclosed her own ;  
And long have I in pleasing terror stay'd  
To hear of boys trepann'd, and girls betray'd ;  
Ashamed so long to stay, and yet to go afraid.

'I could perceive, though Hannah bore full  
well

The ills of life, that few with her would dwell,  
But pass away, like shadows o'er the plain  
From flying clouds, and leave it fair again ;  
Still every evil, be it great or small,  
Would one past sorrow to the mind recall,  
The grand disease of life, to which she turns,  
And common cares and lighter suffering  
spurns.

'O ! these are nothing,—they will never heed  
Such idle contests who have fought indeed,  
And have the wounds unclosed."—I under-  
stood

My hint to speak, and my design pursued,  
Curious the secret of that heart to find,  
To mirth, to song, to laughter loud inclined,  
And yet to bear and feel a weight of grief  
behind :

How does she thus her little sunshine throw  
Always before her ?—I should like to know.  
My friend perceived, and would no longer hide  
The bosom's sorrow—Could she not confide,  
In one who wept, unhurt—in one who felt,  
untried ?

' " Dear child, I show you sins and suffer-  
ings strange,  
But you, like Adam, must for knowledge  
change

That blissful ignorance : remember, then,  
What now you feel should be a check on men ;  
For then your passions no debate allow,  
And therefore lay up resolution now.

'Tis not enough, that when you can persuade  
A maid to love, you know there's promise  
made ;

'Tis not enough, that you design to keep  
That promise made, nor leave your lass to  
weep :

But you must guard yourself against the sin,  
And think it such to draw the party in ;  
Nay, the more weak and easy to be won,  
The viler you who have the mischief done.

" " I am not angry, love ; but men should  
know

They cannot always pay the debt they owe  
Their plighted honour ; they may cause the ill  
They cannot lessen, though they feel a will ;  
For *he* had truth with love, but love in youth  
Does wrong, that cannot be repair'd by truth.

" Ruth—I may tell, too oft had she been  
told—

Was tall and fair, and comely to behold ;  
Gentle and simple, in her native place  
Not one compared with her in form or face ;  
She was not merry, but she gave our hearth  
A cheerful spirit that was more than mirth.

" There was a sailor boy, and people said  
He was, as man, a likeness of the maid ;  
But not in this—for he was ever glad,  
While Ruth was apprehensive, mild, and sad ;  
A quiet spirit hers, and peace would seek  
In meditation : tender, mild, and meek '  
Her loved the lad most truly : and, in truth,  
She took an early liking to the youth :  
To her alone were his attentions paid,  
And they became the bachelor and maid.  
He wish'd to marry, but so prudent we  
And worldly wise, we said it could not be :  
They took the counsel,—may be they  
approved,—

But still they grieved and waited, hoped and  
loved.

" " Now, my young friend, when of such  
state I speak

As one of danger, you will be to seek ;  
You know not, Richard, where the danger lies  
In loving hearts, kind words, and speaking  
eyes ;

For lovers speak their wishes with their looks  
As plainly, love, as you can read your books.  
Then, too, the meetings and the partings,  
all

The playful quarrels in which lovers fall,  
Serve to one end—each lover is a child,  
Quick to resent and to be reconciled ;  
And then their peace brings kindness that  
remains,

And so the lover from the quarrel gains :  
When he has faults that she reproves, his  
fear

And grief assure her she was too severe,  
And that brings kindness—when he bears  
an ill,

Or disappointment, and is calm and still,  
She feels his own obedient to her will,

And that brings kindness—and what kindness brings

I cannot tell you :—these were trying things. They were as children, and they fell at length ; The trial, doubtless, is beyond their strength Whom grace supports not ; and will grace support

The too confiding, who their danger court ? Then they would marry,—but were now too late,—

All could their fault in sport or malice state ; And though the day was fix'd, and now drew on,

I could perceive my daughter's peace was gone ;

She could not bear the bold and laughing eye That gazed on her—reproach she could not fly ;

Her grief she would not show, her shame could not deny :

For some with many virtues come to shame, And some that lose them all preserve their name.

“ Fix'd was the day ; but ere that day appear'd,

A frightful rumour through the place was heard ;

War, who had slept awhile, awaked oncemore, And gangs came pressing till they swept the shore :

Our youth was seized and quickly sent away, Nor would the wretches for his marriage stay, But bore him off, in barbarous triumph bore, And left us all our miseries to deplore :

There were wives, maids, and mothers on the beach,

And some sad story appertain'd to each ; Most sad to Ruth—to neither could she go !

But sat apart, and suffer'd matchless wo ! On the vileskip they turn'd their earnest view, Not one last look allow'd,—not one adieu ! They saw the men on deck, but none distinctly knew.

And there she staid, regardless of each eye, With but one hope, a fervent hope to die : Nor cared she now for kindness—all beheld Her, who invited none, and none repell'd ; For there are griefs, my child, that sufferers hide,

And there are griefs that men display with pride ;

But there are other griefs that, so we feel, We care not to display them nor conceal :

Such were our sorrows on that fatal day, More than our lives the spoilers tore away ; Nor did we heed their insult—some distress No form or manner can make more or less, And this is of that kind—this misery of a press !

They say such things must be—perhaps they must ;

But, sure, they need not fright us and disgust ; They need not soul-less crews of ruffians send At once the ties of humble love to rend :

A single day had Thomas stay'd on shore, He might have wedded, and we ask'd no more ;

And that stern man, who forced the lad away, Might have attended, and have graced the day ;

His pride and honour might have been at rest, It is no stain to make a couple blest !

Blest !—no, alas ! it was to ease the heart Of one sore pang, and then to weep and part !

But this he would not,—English seamen fight For England's gain and glory—it is right :

But will that public spirit be so strong, Fill'd, as it must be, with their private wrong ?

Forbid it, honour ! one in all the fleet Should hide in war, or from the foe retreat ;

But is it just, that he who so defends His country's cause, should hide him from her friends ?

Sure, if they must upon our children seize, They might prevent such injuries as these ;

Might hours—nay, days—in many a case allow,

And soften all the griefs we suffer now. Some laws, some orders might in part redress

The licensed insults of a British press, That keeps the honest and the brave in awe,

Where might is right, and violence is law.

“ Be not alarm'd, my child ; there's none regard

What you and I conceive so cruel-hard : There is compassion, I believe ; but still

One wants the power to help, and one the will, And so from war to war the wrongs remain,

While Reason pleads, and Misery sighs in vain.

“ Thus my poor Ruth was wretched and undone,

Nor had an husband for her only son, Nor had he father ; hope she did awhile,

And would not weep, although she could not smile ;



Till news was brought us that the youth was slain,

And then, I think, she never smiled again ;  
Or if she did, it was but to express  
A feeling far, indeed, from happiness !  
Something that her bewilder'd mind conceived :

When she inform'd us that she never grieved,  
But was right merry, then her head was wild,  
And grief had gain'd possession of my child ;  
Yet, though bewilder'd for a time, and prone  
To ramble much and speak aloud, alone ;  
Yet did she all that duty ever ask'd,  
And more, her will self-govern'd and untask'd :  
With meekness bearing all reproach, all joy  
To her was lost ; she wept upon her boy,  
Wish'd for his death, in fear that he might live  
New sorrow to a burden'd heart to give.

“ There was a teacher, where my husband went—

*Sent*, as he told the people—what he meant  
You cannot understand, but—he was sent :  
This man from meeting came, and strove to win

Her mind to peace by drawing off the sin,  
Or what it was, that, working in her breast,  
Robb'd it of comfort, confidence, and rest :  
He came and reason'd, and she seem'd to feel  
The pains he took—her griefs began to heal ;  
She ever answer'd kindly when he spoke,  
And always thank'd him for the pains he took ;  
So, after three long years, and all the while  
Wrapt up in grief, she blest us with a smile,  
And spoke in comfort ; but she mix'd no more  
With younger persons, as she did before.

“ Still Ruth was pretty ; in her person neat ;

So thought the teacher, when they chanced to meet :

He was a weaver by his worldly trade,  
But powerful work in the assemblies made ;  
People came leagues to town to hear him sift

The holy text,—he had the grace and gift ;  
Widows and maidens flock'd to hear his voice ;  
Of either kind he might have had his choice ;—  
But he had chosen—we had seen how shy  
The girl was getting, my good man and I ;  
That when the weaver came, she kept with us,  
Where he his points and doctrines might discuss ;

But in our bit of garden, or the room  
We call our parlour, there he must not come.

She loved him not, and though she could attend

To his discourses, as her guide and friend,  
Yet now to these she gave a listless ear,  
As if a friend she would no longer hear ;  
This might he take for woman's art, and cried,  
'Spouse of my heart, I must not be denied !'—  
Fearless he spoke, and I had hope to see  
My girl a wife—but this was not to be.

“ My husband, thinking of his worldly store,  
And not, frail man, enduring to be poor,  
Seeing his friend would for his child provide  
And hers, he grieved to have the man denied ;  
For Ruth, when press'd, rejected him, and grew

To her old sorrow, as if that were new.

'Who shall support her ?' said her father,  
'how

Can I, infirm and weak as I am now ?  
And here a loving fool'—this gave her pain,  
Severe, indeed, but she would not complain ;  
Nor would consent, although the weaver grew  
More fond, and would the frighten'd girl pursue.

“ O ! much she begg'd him to forbear, to stand

Her soul's kind friend, and not to ask her hand :

She could not love him.—'Love me !' he replied,

'The love you mean is love unsanctified,  
An earthly, wicked, sensual, sinful kind,  
A creature-love, the passion of the blind.'  
He did not court her, he would have her know,  
For that poor love that will on beauty grow ;  
No ! he would take her as the prophet took  
One of the harlots in the holy book ;  
And then he look'd so ugly and severe !  
And yet so fond—she could not hide her fear.

“ This fondness grew her torment ; she would fly,

In woman's terror, if he came but nigh ;  
Nor could I wonder he should odious prove,  
So like a ghost that left a grave for love.

“ But still her father lent his cruel aid  
To the man's hope, and she was more afraid :  
He said, no more she should his table share,  
But be the parish or the teacher's care.  
'Three days I give you : see that all be right  
On Monday-morning—this is Thursday-night—

Fulfil my wishes, girl ! or else forsake my sight !'

"I see her now; and, she that was so meek,

It was a chance that she had power to speak,  
Now spoke in earnest—"Father! I obey,  
And will remember the appointed day!"

"Then came the man: she talk'd with him apart,

And, I believe, laid open all her heart;  
But all in vain—she said to me, in tears,  
'Mother! that man is not what he appears:  
He talks of heaven, and let him, if he will,  
But he has earthly purpose to fulfil;  
Upon my knees I begg'd him to resign

The hand he asks—he said, it shall be mine:  
What! did the holy men of Scripture deign,  
To hear a woman when she said 'refrain?'  
Of whom they chose they took their wives,  
and these

Made it their study and their wish to please;  
The women then were faithful and afraid,  
As Sarah Abraham, they their lords obey'd,  
And so she styled him; 'tis in later days  
Of foolish love that we our women praise,  
Fall on the knee, and raise the suppliant  
hand,

And court the favour that we might command.

"O! my dear mother, when this man has power,  
How will he treat me—first may beasts  
devour!

Or death in every form that I could prove,  
Except this selfish being's hateful love."

"I gently blamed her, for I knew how hard  
It is to force affection and regard.

"Ah! my dear lad, I talk to you as one  
Who knew the misery of an heart undone;  
You know it not; but, dearest boy, when  
man,

Do not an ill because you find you can:  
Where is the triumph? when such things  
men seek

They only drive to wickedness the weak.

"Weak was poor Ruth, and this good  
man so hard,

That to her weakness he had no regard:  
But we had two days' peace; he came, and  
then

My daughter whisper'd, 'Would there were  
no men!

None to admire or scorn us, none to vex  
A simple, trusting, fond, believing sex;  
Who truly love the worth that men profess,  
And think too kindly for their happiness."

'Poor Ruth! few heroines in the tragic  
page

Felt more than thee in thy contracted stage;  
Fair, fond, and virtuous, they our pity move,  
Impell'd by duty, agonized by love;  
But no Mandane, who in dread has knelt  
On the bare boards, has greater terrors felt,  
Nor been by warring passions more subdued  
Than thou, by this man's grovelling wish  
pursued;

Doom'd to a parent's judgment, all unjust,  
Doom'd the chance mercy of the world to  
trust,

Or to wed grossness and conceal disgust.

"If Ruth was frail, she had a mind too nice  
To wed with that which she beheld as vice;  
To take a reptile, who, beneath a show  
Of peevish zeal, let carnal wishes grow;  
Proud and yet mean, forbidding and yet full  
Of eager appetites, devout and dull,  
Waiting a legal right that he might seize  
His own, and his impatient spirit ease,  
Who would at once his pride and love indulge,  
His temper humour, and his spite divulge.

"This the poor victim saw—a second  
time,

Sighing, she said, 'Shall I commit the crime,  
And now untempted? Can the form or rite  
Make me a wife in my Creator's sight?

Can I the words without a meaning say?

Can I pronounce love, honour, or obey?

And if I cannot, shall I dare to wed,

And go an harlot to a loathed bed?

Never, dear mother! my poor boy and I

Will at the mercy of a parish lie;

Reproved for wants that vices would remove,

Reproach'd for vice that I could never love,

Mix'd with a crew long wedded to disgrace,

A vulgar, forward, equalizing race,—

And am I doom'd to beg a dwelling in that  
place?"

"Such was her reasoning: many times  
she weigh'd

The evils all, and was of each afraid;

Sheloth'd the common board, the vulgarseat,

Where shame, and want, and vice, and

sorrow meet,

Where frailty finds allies, where guilt insures  
retreat.

But peace again is fled: the teacher comes,  
And new importance, haughtier air assumes.

"No hapless victim of a tyrant's love  
More keenly felt, or more resisting strove

Against her fate ; she look'd on every side,  
But there were none to help her, none to  
guide ;—

And he, the man who should have taught the  
soul,

Wish'd but the body in his base control.

“ She left her infant on the Sunday morn,  
A creature doom'd to shame ! in sorrow born ;  
A thing that languish'd, nor arrived at age  
When the man's thoughts with sin and pain  
engage—

She came not home to share our humble meal,  
Her father thinking what his child would feel  
From his hard sentence—still she came not  
home.

The night grew dark, and yet she was not  
come ;

The east-wind roar'd, the sea return'd the  
sound,

And the rain fell as if the world were drown'd :  
There were no lights without, and my good man,  
To kindness frighten'd, with a groan began  
To talk of Ruth, and pray ; and then he took  
The Bible down, and read the holy book ;  
For he had learning : and when that was done  
We sat in silence—whither could we run ?  
We said, and then rush'd frighten'd from the  
door,

For we could bear our own conceit no more :  
We call'd on neighbours—there she had not  
been ;

We met some wanderers—ours they had not  
seen :

We hurried o'er the beach, both north and  
south,

Then join'd, and wander'd to our haven's  
mouth :

Where rush'd the falling waters wildly out,  
I scarcely heard the good man's fearful shout,  
Who saw a something on the billow ride,  
And—Heaven have mercy on our sins ! he  
cried,

It is my child !—and to the present hour  
So he believes—and spirits have the power.

“ And she was gone ! the waters wide and  
deep

Roll'd o'er her body as she lay asleep.

She heard no more the angry waves and wind,  
She heard no more the threat'ning of man-  
kind ;

Wrapt in dark weeds, the refuse of the storm,  
To the hard rock was borne her comely form !

“ But O ! what storm was in that mind ?  
what strife,

That could compel her to lay down her life ?  
For she was seen within the sea to wade,

By one at distance, when she first had pray'd ;  
Then to a rock within the hither shoal  
Softly and with a fearful step she stole ;

Then, when she gain'd it, on the top she stood  
A moment still—and dropt into the flood !  
The man cried loudly, but he cried in vain,—  
She heard not then—she never heard again !  
She had—pray, Heav'n !—she had that world  
in sight,

Where frailty mercy finds, and wrong has  
right ;

But, sure, in this her portion such has been,  
Well had it still remain'd a world unseen ! ”

‘ Thus far the dame : the passions will dis-  
pense

To such a wild and rapid eloquence—

Will to the weakest mind their strength impart,  
And give the tongue the language of the heart.’

## BOOK VI. ADVENTURES OF RICHARD CONCLUDED

Richard relates his Illness and Retirement—  
A Village Priest and his two Daughters—  
His peculiar Studies—His Simplicity of  
Character—Arrival of a third Daughter—  
Her Zeal in his Conversion—Their Friend-  
ship—How terminated—An happy Day—  
Its Commencement and Progress—A  
Journey along the Coast—Arrival as a  
Guest—Company—A Lover's Jealousy—  
it increases—dies away—An Evening Walk  
—Suspense—Apprehension—Resolution—  
Certainty.

‘ THIS then, dear Richard, was the way  
you took

To gain instruction—thine a curious book,  
Containing much of both the false and  
true ;

But thou hast read it, and with profit too ;

‘ Come, then, my Brother, now thy tale  
complete—

I know thy first embarking in the fleet,  
Thy entrance in the army, and thy gain  
Of plenteous laurels in the wars in Spain,

And what then follow'd ; but I wish to know  
When thou that heart hadst courage to  
bestow,

When to declare it gain'd, and when to stand  
Before the priest, and give the plighted hand ;  
So shall I boldness from thy frankness gain  
To paint the frenzy that possess'd my brain ;  
For rather there than in my heart I found  
Was my disease ; a poison, not a wound,  
A madness, Richard—but, I pray thee, tell  
Whom hast thou loved so dearly and so well ?

The younger man his gentle host obey'd,  
For some respect, though not required, was  
paid,

Perhaps with all that independent pride  
Their different states would to the memory  
glide ;

Yet was his manner unconstrain'd and free,  
And nothing in it like servility.

Then he began :—' When first I reach'd  
the land,

I was so ill that death appeared at hand ;  
And though the fever left me, yet I grew  
So weak 'twas judged that life would leave  
me too.

I sought a village-priest, my mother's friend,  
And I believed with him my days would end :  
The man was kind, intelligent, and mild,  
Careless and shrewd, yet simple as the child ;  
For of the wisdom of the world his share  
And mine were equal—neither had to spare ;  
Else—with his daughters, beautiful and  
poor—

He would have kept a sailor from his door :  
Two then were present, who adorn'd his  
home,

But ever speaking of a third to come ;  
Cheerful they were, not too reserved or free,  
I loved them both, and never wish'd them  
three.

' The vicar's self, still further to describe,  
Was of a simple, but a studious tribe ;  
He from the world was distant, not retired.  
Nor of it much possess'd, nor much desired :  
Grave in his purpose, cheerful in his eye,  
And with a look of frank benignity.  
He lost his wife when they together past  
Years of calm love, that triumph'd to the last.  
He much of nature, not of man had seen,  
Yet his remarks were often shrewd and keen ;  
Taught not by books t' approve or to condemn,

He gain'd but little that he knew from them ;

He read with reverence and respect the few,  
Whence he his rules and consolations drew ;  
But men and beasts, and all that lived or  
moved,

Were books to him ; he studied them and  
loved.

He knew the plants in mountain, wood,  
or mead ;

He knew the worms that on the foliage feed ;  
Knew the small tribes that 'scape the careless  
eye,

The plant's disease that breeds the embryo-  
fly ;

And the small creatures who on bark or bough  
Enjoy their changes, changed we know not  
how ;

But now th' imperfect being scarcely moves,  
And now takes wing and seeks the sky it loves.

' He had no system, and forbore to read  
The learned labours of th' immortal Swede ;  
But smiled to hear the creatures he had known  
So long, were now in class and order shown,  
Genus and species—" is it meet," said he,  
" This creature's name should one so sounding  
be ?

'Tis but a fly, though first-born of the spring—  
Bombylius majus, dost thou call the thing ?  
Majus, indeed ! and yet, in fact, 'tis true,  
We all are majors, all are minors too,  
Except the first and last,—th' immensely  
distant two.

And here again,—what call the learned this ?  
Both Hippobosca and Hirundinis ?  
Methinks the creature should be proud to find  
That he employs the talents of mankind ;  
And that his sovereign master shrewdly looks,  
Counts all his parts, and puts them in his  
books.

Well ! go thy way, for I do feel it shame  
To stay a being with so proud a name."

' Such were his daughters, such my quiet  
friend,

And pleasant was it thus my days to spend ;  
But when Matilda at her home I saw,  
Whom I beheld with anxiousness and awe,  
The ease and quiet that I found before  
At once departed, and return'd no more.  
No more their music soothed me as they  
play'd,

But soon her words a strong impression made ;  
The sweet enthusiast, so I deem'd her, took  
My mind, and fix'd it to her speech and  
look ;

My soul, dear girl! she made her constant  
care,

But never whisper'd to my heart "beware!"  
In love no dangers rise till we are in the snare.  
Her father sometimes question'd of my creed,  
And seem'd to think it might amendment  
need;

But great the difference when the pious maid  
To the same errors her attention paid;  
Her sole design that I should think aright,  
And my conversion her supreme delight:  
Pure was her mind, and simple her intent,  
Good all she sought, and kindness all she  
meant.

Next to religion friendship was our theme,  
Related souls and their refined esteem:  
We talk'd of scenes where this is real found,  
And love subsists without a dart or wound;  
But there intruded thoughts not all serene,  
And wishes not so calm would intervene.'

'Saw not her father?'

'Yes; but saw no more

Than he had seen without a fear before:  
He had subsisted by the church and plough,  
And saw no cause for apprehension now.  
We, too, could live: he thought not passion  
wrong,

But only wonder'd we delay'd so long.  
More had he wonder'd had he known esteem  
Was all we mention'd, friendship was our  
theme.—

Laugh, if you please, I must my tale pursue—  
This sacred friendship thus in secret grew  
An intellectual love, most tender, chaste, and  
true:

Unstain'd, we said, nor knew we how it  
chanced

To gain some earthly soil as it advanced;  
But yet my friend, and she alone, could prove  
How much it differ'd from romantic love—  
But this and more I pass—No doubt, at  
length,

We could perceive the weakness of our  
strength.

'O! days remember'd well! remember'd  
all!

The bitter-sweet, the honey and the gall;  
Those garden rambles in the silent night,  
Those trees so shady, and that moon so  
bright;

That thicket alley by the arbour closed,  
That woodbine seat where we at last re-  
posed;

And then the hopes that came and then were  
gone,

Quick as the clouds beneath the moon past  
on;

Now, in this instant, shall my love be shown,  
I said—O! no, the happy time is flown!

'You smile; remember, I was weak and  
low,

And fear'd the passion as I felt it grow:  
Will she, I said, to one so poor attend,  
Without a prospect, and without a friend?  
I dared not ask her—till a rival came,  
But hid the secret, slow-consuming flame.

'I once had seen him; then familiar, free,  
More than became a common guest to be;  
And sure, I said, he has a look of pride  
And inward joy—a lover satisfied.

'Can you not, Brother, on adventures past  
A thought, as on a lively prospect, cast?

On days of dear remembrance! days that  
seem,

When past—nay, even when present, like  
a dream—

These white and blessed days, that softly  
shine

On few, nor oft on them—have they been  
thine?'

George answer'd, 'Yes! dear Richard,  
through the years

Long past, a day so white and mark'd appears:  
As in the storm that pours destruction round,  
Is here and there a ship in safety found;  
So in the storms of life some days appear  
More blest and bright for the preceding fear;  
These times of pleasure that in life arise,  
Like spots in deserts, that delight, surprise,  
And to our wearied senses give the more,  
For all the waste behind us and before;  
And thou, dear Richard, hast then had thy  
share

Of those enchanting times that baffle care?'

'Yes, I have felt this life-refreshing gale  
That bears us onward when our spirits fail;  
That gives those spirits vigour and delight—  
I would describe it, could I do it right.

'Such days have been—a day of days was  
one

When, rising gaily with the rising sun,  
I took my way to join a happy few,  
Known not to me, but whom Matilda knew,  
To whom she went a guest, and message  
sent,

"Come thou to us," and as a guest I went.

'There are two ways to Brandon—by the  
beath

Above the cliff, or on the sand beneath,  
Where the small pebbles, wetted by the wave,  
To the new day reflected lustre gave :  
At first above the rocks I made my way,  
Delighted looking at the spacious bay,  
And the large fleet that to the northward  
steer'd

Full sail, that glorious in my view appear'd ;  
For where does man evince his full control  
O'er subject matter, where displays the soul  
Its mighty energies with more effect  
Than when her powers that moving mass  
direct ?

Than when man guides the ship man's art  
has made,  
And makes the winds and waters yield him  
aid ?

'Much as I longed to see the maid I loved,  
Through scenes so glorious I at leisure moved ;  
For there are times when we do not obey  
The master-passion—when we yet delay—  
When absence, soon to end, we yet prolong,  
And daily with our wish although so strong.

'High were my joys, but they were sober  
too,

Nor reason spoil'd the pictures fancy drew ;  
I felt—rare feeling in a world like this—  
The sober certainty of waking bliss ;  
Add too the smaller aids to happy men,  
Convenient helps—these too were present  
then.

'But what are spirits ? light indeed and  
gay

They are, like winter flowers, nor last a day ;  
Comes a rude icy wind,—they feel, and fade  
away.

'High beat my heart when to the house  
I came,

And when the ready servant gave my name ;  
But when I enter'd that pernicious room,  
Gloomy it look'd, and painful was the gloom ;  
And jealous was the pain, and deep the sigh  
Caused by this gloom, and pain, and jealousy,  
For there Matilda sat, and her beside  
That rival soldier, with a soldier's pride ;  
With self-approval in his laughing face,  
His seem'd the leading spirit of the place :  
She was all coldness—yet I thought a look,  
But that corrected, tender welcome spoke :  
It was as lightning which you think you see,  
But doubt, and ask if lightning it could be.

'Confused and quick my introduction  
pass'd,

When I, a stranger and on strangers cast,  
Beheld the gallant man as he display'd  
Uncheck'd attention to the guilty maid :  
O ! how it grieved me that she dared t' excite  
Those looks in him that show'd so much  
delight ;

Egregious coxcomb ! there—he smiled again,  
As if he thought to aggravate my pain :  
Still she attends—I must approach—and find,  
Or make, a quarrel, to relieve my mind.

'In vain I try—politeness as a shield  
The angry strokes of my contempt repell'd ;  
Nor must I violate the social law  
That keeps the rash and insolent in awe.  
Once I observed, on hearing my replies,  
The woman's terror fix'd on me the eyes  
That look'd entreaty ; but the guideless rage  
Of jealous minds no softness can assuage.  
But, lo ! they rise, and all prepare to take  
The promised pleasure on the neighbouring  
lake.

'Good heaven ! they whisper ! Is it come  
to this ?

Already !—then may I my doubt dismiss :  
Could he so soon a timid girl persuade ?  
What rapid progress has the coxcomb made ;  
And yet how cool her looks, and how demure !  
The falling snow nor lily's flower so pure :  
What can I do ? I must the pair attend,  
And watch this horrid business to its end.

'There, forth they go ! He leads her to  
the shore—

Nay, I must follow,—I can bear no more :  
What can the handsome gipsy have in view  
In trifling thus, as she appears to do ?  
I, who for months have labour'd to succeed,  
Have only lived her vanity to feed.

'O ! you will make me room—'tis very  
kind,  
And meant for him—it tells him he must  
mind ;

Must not be careless :—I can serve to draw  
The soldier on, and keep the man in awe.  
O ! I did think she had a guileless heart,  
Without deceit, capriciousness, or art ;  
And yet a stranger, with a coat of red,  
Has, by an hour's attention, turn'd her head.

'Ah ! how delicious was the morning-drive,  
The soul awaken'd, and its hopes alive :  
How dull this scene by trifling minds enjoy'd,  
The heart in trouble and its hope destroy'd.

' Well, now we land—And will he yet support  
This part ? What favour has he now to court ?

Favour ! O, no ! He means to quit the fair ;  
How strange ! how cruel ! Will she not despair ?

' Well ! take her hand—no further if you please,

I cannot suffer fooleries like these :—

How ? " Love to Julia ! " to his wife ?—  
O ! dear

And injured creature, how must I appear,  
Thus haughty in my looks, and in my words severe ?

Her love to Julia, to the school-day friend  
To whom those letters she has lately penn'd !

Can she forgive ? And now I think again,  
The man was neither insolent nor vain ;

Good humour chiefly would a stranger trace,  
Were he impartial, in the air or face ;

And I so splenetic the whole way long,  
And she so patient—it was very wrong.

' The boat had landed in a shady scene ;  
The grove was in its glory, fresh and green ;

The showers of late had swell'd the branch  
and bough,

And the sun's fervour made them pleasant  
now.

Hard by an oak arose in all its pride,  
And threw its arms along the water's side ;

Its leafy limbs, that on the glassy lake  
Stretch far, and all those dancing shadows make.

' And now we walk—now smaller parties  
seek

Or sun or shade as pleases—Shall I speak ?  
Shall I forgiveness ask, and then apply

For—O ! that vile and intercepting cry.  
Alas ! what mighty ills can trifles make,—

An hat ! the idiot's—fallen in the lake !  
What serious mischief can such idlers do ?

I almost wish the head had fallen too.

' No more they leave us, but will hover  
round,

As if amusement at our cost they found ;  
Vex'd and unhappy I indeed had been,

Had I not something in my charmer seen  
Like discontent, that, though corrected, dwelt

On that dear face, and told me what she  
felt.

' Now must we cross the lake, and as we  
cross'd

Was my whole soul in sweet emotion lost ;

Clouds in white volumes roll'd beneath the  
moon,

Softening her light that on the waters shone :  
This was such bliss ! even then it seem'd

relief  
To veil the gladness in a show of grief :

We sighed as we conversed, and said, how  
deep

This lake on which those broad dark shadows  
sleep ;

There is between us and a watery grave  
But a thin plank, and yet our fate we brave.

" What if it burst ? " Matilda, then my care  
Would be for thee : all danger I would dare,

And, should my efforts fail, thy fortune would  
I share.

" The love of life," she said, " would powerful  
prove ! "

O ! not so powerful as the strength of love :—  
A look of kindness gave the grateful maid,

That had the real effort more than paid.

' But here we land, and haply now may  
choose

Companions home—our way, too, we may  
lose :

In these drear, dark, inosculating lanes,  
The very native of his doubt complains ;

No wonder then that in such lonely ways  
A stranger, heedless of the country, strays ;

A stranger, too, whose many thoughts all  
meet

In one design, and none regard his feet.  
" Is this the path ? " the cautious fair

one cries ;  
I answer, Yes !—" We shall our friends sur-  
prise,"

She added, sighing—I return the sighs.  
" Will they not wonder ? " O ! they

would, indeed,  
Could they the secrets of this bosom read,

These chilling doubts, these trembling hopes  
I feel !

The faint, fond hopes I can no more conceal—  
I love thee, dear Matilda !—to confess

The fact is dangerous, fatal to suppress.  
' And now in terror I approach the home

Where I may wretched but not doubtful come,  
Where I must be all ecstasy, or all,—

O ! what will you a wretch rejected call ?  
Not man, for I shall lose myself, and be

A creature lost to reason, losing thee.  
' Speak, my Matilda ! on the rack of fear

Suspend me not—I would my sentence hear,

Would learn my fate—Good Heaven! and  
what portend

These tears?—and fall they for thy wretched  
friend?

Or—but I cease; I cannot paint the bliss,  
From a confession soft and kind as this;  
Nor where we walk'd, nor how our friends  
we met,

Or what their wonder—I am wondering yet;  
For he who nothing heeds has nothing to  
forget.

'All thought, yet thinking nothing—all  
delight

In every thing, but nothing in my sight!  
Nothing I mark or learn, but am possess'd  
Of joys I cannot paint, and I am bless'd  
In all that I conceive—whatever is, is best.  
Ready to aid all beings, I would go  
The world around to succour human woe;  
Yet am so largely happy, that it seems  
There are no woes, and sorrows are but  
dreams.

'There is a college joy, to scholars known,  
When the first honours are proclaim'd their  
own;

There is ambition's joy, when in their race  
A man surpassing rivals gains his place;

There is a beauty's joy, amid a crowd  
To have that beauty her first fame allow'd;  
And there's the conqueror's joy, when,  
dubious held

And long the fight, he sees the foe repell'd:  
'But what are these, or what are other joys,  
That charm kings, conquerors, beauteous  
nymphs and boys,

Or greater yet, if greater yet be found,  
To that delight when love's dear hope is  
crown'd?

To the first beating of a lover's heart,  
When the loved maid endeavours to impart,  
Frankly yet faintly, fondly yet in fear,  
The kind confession that he holds so dear.  
Now in the morn of our return how strange  
Was this new feeling, this delicious change;  
That sweet delirium, when I gazed in fear,  
That all would yet be lost and disappear.

'Such was the blessing that I sought for  
pain,

In some degree to be myself again;  
And when we met a shepherd old and lame,  
Cold and diseased, it seem'd my blood to  
tame;

And I was thankful for the moral sight,  
That soberized the vast and wild delight.'

## BOOK VII. THE ELDER BROTHER

Conversation—Story of the elder Brother—  
His romantic Views and Habits—The Scene  
of his Meditations—Their Nature—Inter-  
rupted by an Adventure—The Conse-  
quences of it—A strong and permanent  
Passion—Search of its Object—Long inef-  
fectual—How found—The first Interview  
—The second—End of the Adventure—  
Retirement.

'THANKS, my dear Richard; and, I pray  
thee, deign

To speak the truth—does all this love remain,  
And all this joy? for views and flights sub-  
lime,

Ardent and tender, are subdued by time.  
Speaks't thou of her to whom thou mad'st thy  
vows,

Of my fair sister, of thy lawful spouse?  
Or art thou talking some frail love about,  
The rambling fit, before th' abiding gout?'—

'Nay, spare me, Brother, an adorer spare:  
Love and the gout! thou wouldst not these  
compare?'

'Yea, and correctly; teasing ere they  
come,

They then confine their victim to his home:  
In both are previous feints and false attacks,  
Both place the grieving patient on their  
racks:

They both are ours, with all they bring, for  
life,

'Tis not in us t' expel or gout or wife;  
On man a kind of dignity they shed,  
A sort of gloomy pomp about his bed:  
Then if he leaves them, go where'er he  
will,

They have a claim upon his body still;  
Nay, when they quit him, as they sometimes  
do,

What is there left t' enjoy or to pursue?—



But dost thou love this woman ?'

'O! beyond

What I can tell thee of the true and fond :  
Hath she not soothed me, sick, enrich'd me,  
poor,  
And banish'd death and misery from my  
door ?

Has she not cherish'd every moment's bliss,  
And made an Eden of a world like this ?  
When Care would strive with us his watch  
to keep,

Has she not sung the snarling fiend to sleep ?  
And when Distress has look'd us in the face,  
Has she not told him, " thou art not Dis-  
grace ? "

'I must behold her, Richard ; I must see  
This patient spouse who sweetens misery—  
But didst thou need, and wouldst thou not  
apply ?—

Nay, thou wert right—but then how wrong  
was I !'

'My indiscretion was——'

'No more repeat ;

Would I were nothing worse than indis-  
creet ;—

But still there is a plea that I could bring,  
Had I the courage to describe the thing.'

'Then thou too, Brother, couldst of weak-  
ness tell ;

Thou, too, hast found the wishes that rebel  
Against the sovereign reason ; at some time  
Thou hast been fond, heroic, and sublime ;  
Wrote verse, it may be, and for one dear maid  
The sober purposes of life delay'd ;  
From year to year the fruitless chase pursued,  
And hung enamour'd o'er the flying good :  
Then be thy weakness to a Brother shown,  
And give him comfort who displays his own.'

'Ungenerous youth ! dost thou presuming  
ask

A man so grave his failings to unmask ?  
What if I tell thee of a waste of time,  
That on my spirit presses as a crime,  
Wilt thou despise me ?—I, who, soaring, fell  
So late to rise—Hear then the tale I tell ;  
Who tells what thou shalt hear, esteems his  
hearer well.

'Yes, my dear Richard, thou shalt hear  
me own

Follies and frailties thou hast never known ;  
Thine was a frailty,—folly, if you please,—  
But mine a flight, a madness, a disease.

'Turn with me to my twentieth year, for  
then

The lover's frenzy ruled the poet's pen ;  
When virgin reams were soil'd with lays of  
love,

The flinty hearts of fancied nymphs to move :  
Then was I pleased in lonely ways to tread,  
And muse on tragic tales of lovers dead ;  
For all the merit I could then descry  
In man or woman was for love to die.

'I mused on charmers chaste, who pledged  
their truth,

And left no more the once-accepted youth ;  
Though he disloyal, lost, diseased, became,  
The widow'd turtle's was a deathless flame :  
This faith, this feeling, gave my soul delight,  
Truth in the lady, ardour in the knight.

'I built me castles wondrous rich and rare,  
Few castle-builders could with me compare ;  
The hall, the palace, rose at my command,  
And these I fill'd with objects great and  
grand.

Virtues sublime, that nowhere else would live,  
Glory and pomp, that I alone could give ;  
Trophies and thrones by matchless valour  
gain'd,

Faith unproved, and chastity unstain'd ;  
With all that soothes the sense and charms  
the soul,

Came at my call, and were in my control.

'And who was I ? a slender youth and tall,  
In manner awkward, and with fortune small ;  
With visage pale, my motions quick and slow,  
That fall and rising in the spirits show ;  
For none could more by outward signs express  
What wise men lock within the mind's recess ;  
Had I a mirror set before my view,  
I might have seen what such a form could do ;  
Had I within the mirror truth beheld,  
I should have such presuming thoughts re-  
pell'd ;

But awkward as I was, without the grace  
That gives new beauty to a form or face ;  
Still I expected friends most true to prove,  
And grateful, tender, warm, assiduous love.

'Assured of this, that love's delicious bond  
Would hold me ever faithful, ever fond ;  
It seem'd but just that I in love should find  
A kindred heart as constant and as kind.  
Give me, I cried, a beauty ; none on earth  
Of higher rank or nobler in her birth ;  
Pride of her race, her father's hope and care,  
Yet meek as children of the cottage are ;

Nursed in the court, and there by love pursued,  
 But fond of peace, and blest in solitude ;  
 By rivals honour'd, and by beauties praised,  
 Yet all unconscious of the envy raised ;  
 Suppose her this, and from attendants freed,  
 To want my prowess in a time of need,  
 When safe and grateful she desires to show  
 She feels the debt that she delights to owe,  
 And loves the man who saved her in distress—  
 So fancy will'd, nor would compound for less.

' This was my dream.—In some auspicious  
 hour,

In some sweet solitude, in some green bower,  
 Whither my fate should lead me, there, un-  
 seen,

I should behold my fancy's gracious queen,  
 Singing sweet song! that I should hear awhile,  
 Then catch the transient glory of a smile ;  
 Then at her feet with trembling hope should  
 kneel,

Such as rapt saints and raptured lovers feel ;  
 To watch the chaste unfoldings of her heart,  
 In joy to meet, in agony to part,  
 And then in tender song to soothe my grief,  
 And hail, in glorious rhyme, my *Lady of the*  
*Leaf*.

' To dream these dreams I chose a woody  
 scene,

My guardian-shade, the world and me be-  
 tween ;

A green inclosure, where beside its bound  
 A thorny fence beset its beauties round,  
 Save where some creature's force had made  
 a way

For me to pass, and in my kingdom stray :  
 Here then I stray'd, then sat me down to call,  
 Just as I will'd, my shadowy subjects all !  
 Fruits of all minds conceived on every coast,  
 Fay, witch, enchanter, devil, demon, ghost ;  
 And thus with knights and nymphs, in halls  
 and bowers,

In war and love, I pass'd unnumber'd hours :  
 Gross and substantial beings all forgot,  
 Ideal glories beam'd around the spot,  
 And all that was, with me, of this poor world  
 was not.

' Yet in this world there was a single scene,  
 That I allow'd with mine to intervene ;  
 This house, where never yet my feet had  
 stray'd,

I with respect and timid awe survey'd ;  
 With pleasing wonder I have oft-times stood,  
 To view these turrets rising o'er the wood ;

When fancy to the halls and chambers flew,  
 Large, solemn, silent, that I must not view ;  
 The moat was then, and then o'er all the  
 ground

Tall elms and ancient oaks stretch'd far  
 around ;

And where the soil forbade the nobler race,  
 Dwarf trees and humbler shrubs had found  
 their place,

Forbidding man in their close hold to go,  
 Haw, gatter, holm, the service and the sloe ;  
 With tangling weeds that at the bottom grew,  
 And climbers all above their feathery branches  
 threw.

Nor path of man or beast was there espied,  
 But there the birds of darkness loved to hide,  
 The loathed toad to lodge, and speckled snake  
 to glide.

' To me this hall, thus view'd in part,  
 appear'd

A mansion vast. I wonder'd, and I fear'd ;  
 There as I wander'd, fancy's forming eye  
 Could gloomy cells and dungeons dark espy ;  
 Winding through these, I caught th' appalling  
 sound

Of troubled souls, that guilty minds confound,  
 Where murder made its way, and mischief  
 stalk'd around.

Above the roof were raised the midnight  
 storms,

And the wild lights betray'd the shadowy  
 forms.

' With all these flights and fancies, then so  
 dear,

I reach'd the birth-day of my twentieth year :  
 And in the evening of a day in June

Was singing—as I sang—some heavenly tune ;  
 My native tone, indeed, was harsh and hoarse,  
 But he who feels such powers can sing of  
 course—

Is there a good on earth, or gift divine,  
 That fancy cannot say, behold ! 'tis mine ?

' So was I singing, when I saw descend  
 From this old seat a lady and her friend ;  
 Downward they came with steady pace and  
 slow,

Arm link'd in arm, to bless my world below.  
 I knew not yet if they escaped, or chose  
 Their own free way,—if they had friends or  
 foes,—

But near to my dominion drew the pair,  
 Link'd arm in arm, and walk'd, conversing,  
 there.

'I saw them ere they came, myself unseen,  
My lofty fence and thorny bound between—  
And one alone, one matchless face I saw,  
And, though at distance, felt delight and awe :  
Fancy and truth adorn'd her ; fancy gave  
Much, but not all ; truth help'd to make  
their slave ;

For she was lovely, all was not the vain  
Or sickly homage of a fever'd brain ;  
No ! she had beauty, such as they admire  
Whose hope is earthly, and whose love desire ;  
Imagination might her aid bestow,  
But she had charms that only truth could show.

'Their dress was such as well became the  
place,

But one superior ; hers the air, the grace,  
The condescending looks, that spoke the  
nobler race.

Slender she was and tall : her fairy-feet  
Bore her right onward to my shady seat ;  
And O ! I sigh'd that she would nobly dare  
To come, nor let her friend th' adventure  
share ;

But see how I in my dominion reign,  
And never wish to view the world again.

'Thus was I musing, seeing with my eyes  
These objects, with my mind her fantasies,  
And chiefly thinking—is this maid, divine  
As she appears, to be this queen of mine ?  
Have I from henceforth beauty in my view,  
Not airy all, but tangible and true ?

Here then I fix, here bound my vagrant views,  
And here devote my heart, my time, my muse.

'She saw not this, though ladies early trace  
Their beauty's power, the glories of their face ;  
Yet knew not this fair creature—could not  
know—

That new-born love ! that I too soon must  
show :

And I was musing—how shall I begin ?  
How make approach my unknown way to win,  
And to that heart, as yet untouch'd, make  
known

The wound, the wish, the weakness of my  
own ?

Such is my part, but—Mercy ! what alarm ?  
Dare aught on earth that sovereign beauty  
harm ?

Again—the shrieking charmers—how they  
rend

The gentle air—The shriekers lack a friend—  
They are my princess and th' attendant maid  
In so much danger, and so much afraid !—

But whence the terror ?—Let me haste and see  
What has befallen them who cannot flee—  
Whence can the peril rise ? What can the  
peril be ?

'It soon appear'd, that while this nymph  
divine

Moved on, there met her rude uncivil kine,  
Who knew her not—the damsel was not there  
Who kept them—all obedient—in her care ;  
Strangers they thus defied and held in scorn,  
And stood in threat'ning posture, hoof and  
horn ;

While Susan—pail in hand—could stand the  
while

And prate with Daniel at a distant stile.

'As feeling prompted, to the place I ran,  
Resolved to save the maids and show the  
man :

Was each a cow like that which challenged  
Guy,

I had resolved t' attack it, and defy  
In mortal combat ! to repel or die.

That was no time to parley—or to say,  
I will protect you—fly in peace away !  
Lo ! yonder stile—but with an air of grace,  
As I supposed, I pointed to the place.

'The fair ones took me at my sign, and flew,  
Each like a dove, and to the stile withdrew ;  
Where safe, at distance, and from terrors free,  
They turn'd to view my beastly foes and me.

'I now had time my business to behold,  
And did not like it—let the truth be told :  
The cows, though cowards, yet in numbers  
strong,

Like other mobs, by might defended wrong ;  
In man's own pathway fix'd, they seem'd  
disposed

For hostile measure, and in order closed,  
Then halted near me, as I judged, to treat,  
Before we came to triumph or defeat.

'I was in doubt : 'twas sore disgrace, I  
knew,

To turn my back, and let the cows pursue ;  
And should I rashly mortal strife begin,  
'Twas all unknown who might the battle win ;  
And yet to wait, and neither fight nor fly,  
Would mirth create,—I could not that deny ;  
It look'd as if for safety I would treat,  
Nay, sue for peace—No ! rather come defeat !  
"Look to me, loveliest of thy sex ! and give  
One cheering glance, and not a cow shall live ;  
For lo ! this iron bar, this strenuous arm,  
And those dear eyes to aid me as a charm."

'Say, goddess! Victory! say, on man or cow  
Meane'st thou now to perch?—On neither  
now—

For, as I ponder'd, on their way appear'd  
The Amazonian milker of the herd;  
These, at the wonted signals, made a stand,  
And woo'd the nymph of the relieving hand;  
Nor heeded now the man, who felt relief  
Of other kind, and not unmix'd with grief;  
For now he neither should his courage prove,  
Nor in his dying moments boast his love.

'My sovereign beauty with amazement  
saw—

So she declared—the horrid things in awe;  
Well pleased, she witness'd what respect was  
paid

By such brute natures—Every cow afraid,  
And kept at distance by the powers of one,  
Who had to her a dangerous service done,  
That prudence had declined, that valour's  
self might shun.

'So thought the maid, who now, beyond  
the stile,

Received her champion with a gracious smile;  
Who now had leisure on those charms to dwell,  
That he could never from his thought expel;  
There are, I know, to whom a lover seems,  
Praising his mistress, to relate his dreams;  
But, Richard, looks like those, that angel-face  
Could I no more in sister-angel trace;  
O! it was more than fancy! it was more  
Than in my darling views I saw before,  
When I my idol made, and my allegiance  
swore.

'Henceforth 'twas bliss upon that face to  
dwell,

Till every trace became indelible;  
I bless'd the cause of that alarm, her fright,  
And all that gave me favour in her sight,  
Who then was kind and grateful, till my mind,  
Pleased and exulting, awe awhile resign'd.  
For in the moment when she feels afraid,  
How kindly speaks the condescending maid;  
She sees her danger near, she wants her  
lover's aid;

As fire electric, when discharged, will strike  
All who receive it, and they feel alike,  
So in the shock of danger and surprise  
Our minds are struck, and nix, and sym-  
pathise.

'But danger dies, and distance comes  
between

My state and that of my all glorious queen;

Yet much was done—upon my mind a chain  
Was strongly fix'd, and likely to remain;  
Listening, I grew enamour'd of the sound,  
And felt to her my very being bound;  
I bless'd the scene, nor felt a power to move,  
Lost in the ecstasies of infant-love.

'She saw and smiled; the smile delight  
convey'd,

My love encouraged, and my act repaid:  
In that same smile I read the charmer meant  
To give her hero chaste encouragement;  
It spoke, as plainly as a smile can speak,  
"Seek whom you love, love freely whom you  
seek."

'Thus, when the lovely witch had wrought  
her charm,

She took th' attendant maiden by the arm,  
And left me fondly gazing, till no more  
I could the shade of that dear form explore;  
Then to my secret haunt I turn'd again,  
Fire in my heart, and fever in my brain;  
That face of her for ever in my view,  
Whom I was henceforth fated to pursue,  
To hope I knew not what, small hope in what  
I knew.

'O! my dear Richard, what a waste of time  
Gave I not thus to lunacy sublime;  
What days, months, years (to useful purpose  
lost),

Has not this dire infatuation cost?  
To this fair vision I, a bounded slave,  
Time, duty, credit, honour, comfort, gave;  
Gave all—and waited for the glorious things  
That hope expects, but fortune never brings.  
Yet let me own, while I my fault reprove,  
There is one blessing still affix'd to love—  
To love like mine—for, as my soul it drew  
From reason's path, it shunn'd dishonour's  
too;

It made my taste refined, my feelings nice,  
And placed an angel in the way of vice.

'This angel now, whom I no longer view'd,  
Far from this scene her destined way pursued;  
No more that mansion held a form so fair,  
She was away, and beauty was not there.

'Such, my dear Richard, was my early  
flame,

My youthful frenzy—give it either name;  
It was the withering bane of many a year,  
That past away in causeless hope and fear;  
The hopes, the fears, that every dream could  
kill,

Or make alive, and lead my passive will.

' At length I learnt one name my angel bore,  
And Rosabella I must now adore :

Yet knew but this—and not the favour'd  
place

That held the angel or th' angelic race ;  
Nor where, admired, the sweet enchantress  
dwelt.

But I had lost her—that, indeed, I felt.

' Yet, would I say, she will at length be  
mine !

Did ever hero hope or love resign ?  
Though men oppose, and fortune bids despair,  
She will in time her mischief well repair,  
And I, at last, shall wed this fairest of the  
fair !

' My thrifty uncle, now return'd, began  
To stir within me what remained of man ;  
My powerful frenzy painted to the life,  
And ask'd me if I took a dream to wife ?  
Debate ensued, and though not well content,  
Upon a visit to his house I went :  
He, the most saving of mankind, had still  
Some kindred feeling ; he would guide my  
will,

And teach me wisdom—so affection wrought,  
That he to save me from destruction sought :  
To him destruction, the most awful curse  
Of misery's children, was—an empty purse !  
He his own books approved, and thought the  
pen

An useful instrument for trading men ;  
But judged a quill was never to be slit  
Except to make it for a merchant fit :  
He, when informed how men of taste could  
write,

Look'd on his ledger with supreme delight ;  
Then would he laugh, and, with insulting  
joy,

Tell me aloud, " that 's poetry, my boy ;  
These are your golden numbers—them repeat,  
The more you have, the more you'll find them  
sweet—

Their numbers move all hearts—no matter  
for their feet.

Sir, when a man composes in this style,  
What is to him a critic's frown or smile ?  
What is the puppy's censure or applause  
To the good man who on his banker draws,  
Buys an estate, and writes upon the grounds,  
' Pay to A. B. an hundred thousand pounds ?'  
Thus, my dear nephew, thus your talents  
prove ;

Leave verse to poets, and the poor to love."

' Some months I suffered thus, compell'd  
to sit

And hear a wealthy kinsman aim at wit ;  
Yet there was something in his nature good,  
And he had feeling for the tie of blood :  
So while I languish'd for my absent maid  
I some observance to my uncle paid.'

' Had you inquired ?' said Richard.

' I had placed

Inquirers round, but nothing could be traced ;  
Of every reasoning creature at this Hall,  
And tenant near it, I applied to all—  
Tell me if she—and I described her well—  
Dwelt long a guest, or where retired to dwell ?  
But no ! such lady they remember'd not—  
They saw that face, strange beings ! and for-  
got.

Nor was inquiry all ; but I pursued  
My soul's first wish, with hope's vast strength  
endued :

I cross'd the seas, I went where strangers go,  
And gazed on crowds as one who dreads a foe,  
Or seeks a friend ; and, when I sought in vain,  
Fled to fresh crowds, and hoped, and gazed  
again.'

' It was a strong possession '—' Strong and  
strange,

I felt the evil, yet desired not change :  
Years now had flown, nor was the passion  
cured,

But hope had life, and so was life endured ;  
The mind's disease, with all its strength,  
stole on,  
Till youth, and health, and all but love were  
gone.

And there were seasons, Richard, horrid hours  
Of mental suffering ! they o'erthrew my  
powers,

And made my mind unsteady—I have still,  
At times, a feeling of that nameless ill,  
That is not madness—I could always tell  
My mind was wandering—knew it was not  
well ;

Felt all my loss of time, the shameful waste  
Of talents perish'd, and of parts disgraced :  
But though my mind was sane, there was  
a void—

My understanding seem'd in part destroy'd ;  
I thought I was not of my species one,  
But unconnected ! injured and undone.

' While in this state, once more my uncle  
pray'd

That I would hear—I heard, and I obey'd ;

For I was thankful that a being broke  
On this my sadness, or an interest took  
In my poor life—but, at his mansion, rest  
Came with its halcyon stillness to my breast :  
Slowly there enter'd in my mind concern  
For things about me—I would something  
learn,

And to my uncle listen ; who, with joy,  
Found that ev'n yet I could my powers  
employ,

Till I could feel new hopes my mind possess,  
Of ease at least, if not of happiness :  
Till, not contented, not in discontent,  
As my good uncle counsell'd, on I went ;  
Conscious of youth's great error—nay, the  
crime

Of manhood now—a dreary waste of time !  
Conscious of that account which I must give  
How life had past with me—I strove to live.

' Had I, like others, my first hope attain'd,  
I must, at least, a certainty have gain'd ;  
Had I, like others, lost the hope of youth,  
Another hope had promised greater truth ;  
But I in baseless hopes, and groundless views,  
Was fated time, and peace, and health to lose,  
Impell'd to seek, for ever doom'd to fail,  
Is—I distress you—let me end my tale.

' Something one day occur'd about a bill  
That was not drawn with true mercantile skill,  
And I was ask'd and authorized to go  
To seek the firm of Clutterbuck and Co. ;  
Their hour was past—but when I urged the  
case,

There was a youth who named a second place,  
Where, on occasions of important kind,  
I might the man of occupation find  
In his retirement, where he found repose  
From the vexations that in business rose.  
I found, though not with ease, this private  
seat

Of soothing quiet, wisdom's still retreat.

' The house was good, but not so pure and  
clean

As I had houses of retirement seen ;  
Yet men, I knew, of meditation deep,  
Love not their maidens should their studies  
sweep ;

His room I saw, and must acknowledge, there  
Were not the signs of cleanliness or care :

A female servant, void of female grace,  
Loose in attire, proceeded to the place ;  
She stared intrusive on my slender frame,  
And boldly ask'd my business and my name.

' I gave them both ; and, left to be amused,  
Well as I might, the parlour I perused.  
The shutters half unclosed, the curtains fell  
Half down, and rested on the window-sill,  
And thus, confusedly, made the room half  
visible :

Late as it was, the little parlour bore  
Some tell-tale tokens of the night before ;  
There were strange sights and scents about  
the room,

Of food high season'd, and of strong perfume ;  
Two unmatched sofas ample rents display'd,  
Carpet and curtains were alike decay'd ;  
A large old mirror, with once-gilded frame,  
Reflected prints that I forbear to name,  
Such as a youth might purchase—but, in truth,  
Not a sedate or sober-minded youth :

The cinders yet were sleeping in the grate,  
Warm from the fire, continued large and late,  
As left by careless folk, in their neglected  
state ;

The chairs in haste seem'd whirl'd about the  
room,

As when the sons of riot hurry home,  
And leave the troubled place to solitude and  
gloom.

' All this, for I had ample time, I saw,  
And prudence question'd—should we not  
withdraw ?

For he who makes me thus on business wait,  
Is not for business in a proper state ;  
But man there was not, was not he for whom  
To this convenient lodging I was come ;  
No ! but a lady's voice was heard to call  
On my attention—and she had it all ;  
For lo ! she enters, speaking ere in sight,  
" Monsieur ! I shall not want the chair to-  
night—

Where shall I see him ?"—This dear hour  
atones

For all affection's hopeless sighs and groans—  
Then turning to me—" Art thou come at last ?  
A thousand welcomes—be forgot the past ;  
Forgotten all the grief that absence brings,  
Fear that torments, and jealousy that stings—  
All that is cold, injurious, and unkind,  
Be it for ever banish'd from the mind ;  
And in that mind, and in that heart be now  
The soft endearment, and the binding vow."

' She spoke—and o'er the practised features  
threw

The looks that reason charm, and strength  
subdue.

'Will you not ask, how I beheld that face,  
Or read that mind, and read it in that place?  
I have tried, Richard, oft-times, and in vain,  
To trace my thoughts, and to review their  
train—

If train there were—that meadow, grove, and  
stile,

The fright, th' escape, her sweetness and her  
smile;

Years since elapsed, and hope, from year to  
year,

To find her free—and then to find her here!

'But is it she?—O! yes; the rose is dead,  
All beauty, fragrance, freshness, glory fled:  
But yet 'tis she—the same and not the same—  
Who to my bower an heavenly being came;  
Who waked my soul's first thought of real  
bliss,

Whom long I sought, and now I find her—  
this.

'I cannot paint her—something I had seen  
So pale and slim, and tawdry and unclean;  
With haggard looks, of vice and wo the prey,  
Laughing in languor, miserably gay:  
Her face, where face appear'd, was amply  
spread,

By art's coarse pencil, with ill-chosen red,  
The flower's fictitious bloom, the blushing of  
the dead:

But still the features were the same, and  
strange

My view of both—the sameness and the  
change,

That fix'd me gazing and my eye enchain'd,  
Although so little of herself remain'd;

It is the creature whom I loved, and yet  
Is far unlike her—Would I could forget  
The angel or her fall! the once adored  
Or now despised! the worshipp'd or deplored!

"O! Rosabella!" I prepared to say,  
"Whom I have loved," but prudence  
whisper'd nay,

And folly grew ashamed—discretion had her  
day.

She gave her hand; which, as I lightly  
press'd,

The cold but ardent grasp my soul oppress'd;  
The ruin'd girl disturb'd me, and my eyes  
Look'd, I conceive, both sorrow and surprise.

'I spoke my business—"He," she answer'd,  
"comes

And lodges here—he has the backward  
rooms—

He now is absent, and I chanced to hear  
Will not before to-morrow eve appear,  
And may be longer absent—O! the night  
When you preserved me in that horrid fright;  
A thousand, thousand times, asleep, awake,  
I thought of what you ventured for my sake—  
Now have you thought—yet tell me so—  
deceive

Your Rosabella, willing to believe?  
O! there is something in love's first-born pain  
Sweeter than bliss—it never comes again—  
But has your heart been faithful?"—Here  
my pride

To anger rising, her attempt defied—  
"My faith must childish in your sight appear,  
Who have been faithful—to how many,  
dear?"

'If words had fail'd, a look explain'd their  
style,  
She could not blush assent, but she could  
smile:

Good heaven! I thought, have I rejected  
fame,  
Credit and wealth, for one who smiles at  
shame?

'She saw me thoughtful—saw it, as I  
guess'd,  
With some concern, though nothing she ex-  
press'd.

"Come, my dear friend, discard that look  
of care,

All things were made to be, as all things are;  
All to seek pleasure as the end design'd,  
The only good in matter or in mind;  
So was I taught by one, who gave me all  
That my experienced heart can wisdom call.

"I saw thee young, love's soft obedient  
slave,

And many a sigh to my young lover gave;  
And I had, spite of cowardice or cow,  
Return'd thy passion, and exchanged my vow;  
But while I thought to bait the amorous hook,  
One set for me my eager fancy took;  
There was a crafty eye, that far could see,  
And through my failings fascinated me:  
Mine was a childish wish, to please my boy;  
His a design, his wishes to enjoy.

O! we have both about the world been tost,  
Thy gain I know not—I, they cry, am lost;  
So let the wise ones talk; they talk in vain,  
And are mistaken both in loss and gain;  
'Tis gain to get whatever life affords,  
'Tis loss to spend our time in empty words.

"I was a girl, and thou a boy wert then,  
Nor ought of women knew, nor I of men;  
But I have traffick'd in the world, and thou,  
Doubtless, canst boast of thy experience now;  
Let us the knowledge we have gain'd produce,  
And kindly turn it to our common use."

"Thus spoke the siren in voluptuous style,  
While I stood gazing and perplex'd the while,  
Chain'd by that voice, confounded by that  
smile.

And then she sang, and changed from grave  
to gay,  
Till all reproach and anger died away.

"My Damon was the first to wake  
The gentle flame that cannot die;  
My Damon is the last to take  
The faithful bosom's softest sigh:  
The life between is nothing worth,  
O! cast it from thy thought away;  
Think of the day that gave it birth,  
And this its sweet returning day.

"Buried be all that has been done,  
Or say that naught is done amiss;  
For who the dangerous path can shun  
In such bewildering world as this?  
But love can every fault forgive,  
Or with a tender look reprove;  
And now let naught in memory live,  
But that we meet, and that we love."

"And then she moved my pity; for she  
wept,

And told her miseries till resentment slept;  
For when she saw she could not reason blind,  
She pour'd her heart's whole sorrows on my  
mind,

With features graven on my soul, with sighs  
Seen but not heard, with soft imploring eyes,  
And voice that needed not, but had the aid  
Of powerful words to soften and persuade.

"O! I repent me of the past; and sure  
Grief and repentance make the bosom pure;  
Yet meet thee not with clean and single heart,  
As on the day we met!—and but to part,  
Ere I had drank the cup that to my lip  
Was held, and press'd till I was forced to sip:  
I drank indeed, but never ceased to hate,—  
It poison'd, but could not intoxicate:  
T' excuse my fall I plead not love's excess,  
But a weak orphan's need and loneliness.  
I had no parent upon earth—no door  
Was oped to me—young, innocent, and poor,

Vain, tender and resentful—and my friend  
Jealous of one who must on her depend,  
Making life misery—You could witness then  
That I was precious in the eyes of men;  
So, made by them a goddess, and denied  
Respect and notice by the women's pride;  
Here scorn'd, there worshipp'd—will it  
strange appear,

Allured and driven, that I settled here?  
Yet loved it not; and never have I pass'd  
One day, and wish'd another like the last.  
There was a fallen angel, I have read,  
For whom their tears the sister-angels shed,  
Because, although she ventured to rebel,  
She was not minded like a child of hell.—  
Such is my lot! and will it not be given  
To grief like mine, that I may think of  
heaven?

Behold how there the glorious creatures shine,  
And all my soul to grief and hope resign?"

"I wonder'd, doubting—and is this a fact,  
I thought; or part thou art disposed to act?"

"Is it not written, He, who came to save  
Sinners, the sins of deepest dye forgave?  
That he his mercy to the sufferers dealt,  
And pardon'd error when the ill was felt?  
Yes! I would hope, there is an eye that reads  
What is within, and sees the heart that  
bleeds—

But who on earth will one so lost deplore,  
And who will help that lost one to restore?  
Who will on trust the sigh of grief receive;  
And—all things warring with belief—  
believe?"

"Soften'd, I said—"Be mine the hand and  
heart,

If with your world you will consent to part."  
She would—she tried—Alas! she did not  
know

How deeply rooted evil habits grow:  
She felt the truth upon her spirits press,  
But wanted ease, indulgence, show, excess,  
Voluptuous banquets, pleasures—not refined,  
But such as soothe to sleep th' opposing  
mind—

She look'd for idle vice, the time to kill,  
And subtle, strong apologies for ill;  
And thus her yielding, unresisting soul  
Sank, and let sin confuse her and control:  
Pleasures that brought disgust yet brought  
relief,  
And minds she hated help'd to war with  
grief."



' Thus then she perish'd ? '—

' Nay—but thus she proved  
Slave to the vices that she never loved :  
But while she thus her better thoughts  
opposed,  
And woo'd the world, the world's deceptions  
closed :—

I had long lost her ; but I sought in vain  
To banish pity :—still she gave me pain,  
Still I desired to aid her—to direct,  
And wish'd the world, that won her, to reject :  
Nor wish'd in vain—there came, at length,  
request

That I would see a wretch with grief oppress'd,  
By guilt affrighted—and I went to trace  
Once more the vice-worn features of that face,  
That sin-wreck'd being ! and I saw her laid  
Where never worldly joy a visit paid :  
That world receding fast ! the world to come  
Conceal'd in terror, ignorance, and gloom ;  
Sins, sorrow, and neglect : with not a spark  
Of vital hope,—all horrible and dark—  
It frighten'd me !—I thought, and shall not I  
Thus feel ? thus fear ?—this danger can I fly ?  
Do I so wisely live that I can calmly die ?

' The wants I saw I could supply with ease,  
But there were wants of other kind than  
these ;

Th' awakening thought, the hope-inspiring  
view—

The doctrines awful, grand, alarming, true—  
Most painful to the soul, and yet most healing  
too :

Still I could something offer, and could send  
For other aid—a more important friend,  
Whose duty call'd him, and his love no less,  
To help the grieving spirit in distress ;  
To save in that sad hour the drooping prey,  
And from its victim drive despair away.  
All decent comfort round the sick was seen ;  
The female helpers quiet, sober, clean ;  
Her kind physician with a smile appear'd,  
And zealous love the pious friend endear'd :  
While I, with mix'd sensations, could inquire,  
Hast thou one wish, one unfulfill'd desire ?  
Speak every thought, nor unindulged depart,  
If I can make thee happier than thou art !

' Yes ! there was yet a female friend, an old  
And grieving nurse ! to whom it should be  
told—

If I would tell—that she, her child, had fail'd,  
And turn'd from truth ! yet truth at length  
prevail'd.

' 'Twas in that chamber, Richard, I began  
To think more deeply of the end of man :  
Was it to jostle all his fellows by,  
To run before them, and say, " here am I,  
Fall down and worship ? "—Was it, life  
throughout,

With circumspection keen to hunt about  
As spaniels for their game, where might be  
found

Abundance more for coffers than abound ?  
Or was it life's enjoyments to prefer,  
Like this poor girl, and then to die like her ?  
No ! He, who gave the faculties, design'd  
Another use for the immortal mind :  
There is a state in which it will appear  
With all the good and ill contracted here ;  
With gain and loss, improvement and defect ;  
And then, my soul ! what hast thou to expect  
For talents laid aside, life's waste, and time's  
neglect ?

' Still as I went came other change—the  
frame

And features wasted, and yet slowly came  
The end ; and so inaudible the breath,  
And still the breathing, we exclaimed—'tis  
death !

But death it was not : when, indeed, she died,  
I sat and his last gentle stroke espied :  
When—as it came—or did my fancy trace  
That lively, lovely flushing o'er the face ?  
Bringing back all that my young heart im-  
press'd !

It came—and went !—She sigh'd, and was at  
rest !

' Adieu, I said, fair Frailty ! dearly cost  
The love I bore thee—time and treasure lost ;  
And I have suffer'd many years in vain ;  
Now let me something in my sorrows gain :  
Heaven would not all this wo for man in-  
tend

If man's existence with his wo should end ;  
Heaven would not pain, and grief, and anguish  
give,

If man was not by discipline to live ;  
And for that brighter, better world prepare,  
That souls with souls, when purified, shall  
share,

Those stains all done away that must not  
enter there.

' Home I return'd, with spirits in that state  
Of vacant wo, I strive not to relate,  
Nor how, deprived of all her hope and strength,  
My soul turn'd feebly to the world at length.

I travell'd then till health again resumed  
 Its former seat—I must not say re-bloom'd ;  
 And then I fill'd, not loth, that favourite place  
 That has enrich'd some seniors of our race ;  
 Patient and dull I grew ; my uncle's praise  
 Was largely dealt me on my better days ;  
 A love of money—other love at rest—  
 Came creeping on, and settled in my breast ;  
 The force of habit held me to the oar,  
 Till I could relish what I scorn'd before :  
 I now could talk and scheme with *men of sense*,  
 Who deal for millions, and who sigh for pence,  
 And grew so like them, that I heard with joy  
 Old Blueskin said I was a pretty boy ;  
 For I possess'd the caution with the zeal,  
 That all true lovers of their interest feel :  
 Exalted praise ! and to the creature due,  
 Who loves that interest solely to pursue.

' But I was sick, and sickness brought  
 disgust ;  
 My peace I could not to my profits trust :

Again some views of brighter kind appear'd,  
 My heart was humbled, and my mind was  
 clear'd ;

I felt those helps that souls diseased restore,  
 And that cold frenzy, avarice, raged no more.  
 From dreams of boundless wealth I then  
 arose ;

This place, the scene of infant bliss, I chose,  
 And here I find relief, and here I seek repose.

' Yet much is lost, and not yet much is  
 found,

But what remains, I would believe, is sound ;  
 That first wild passion, that last mean desire,  
 Are felt no more ; but holier hopes require  
 A mind prepared and steady—my reform  
 Has fears like his, who, suffering in a storm,  
 Is on a rich but unknown country cast,  
 The future fearing, while he feels the past ;  
 But whose more cheerful mind, with hope  
 imbued,  
 Sees through receding clouds the rising good.'

## BOOK VIII. THE SISTERS

Morning Walk and Conversation—Visit at  
 a Cottage—Characters of the Sisters—Lucy  
 and Jane—Their Lovers—Their Friend the  
 Banker and his Lady—Their Intimacy—  
 Its Consequence—Different Conduct of the  
 Lovers—The Effect upon the Sisters—  
 Their present State—The Influence of their  
 Fortune upon the Minds of either.

THE morning shone in cloudless beauty  
 bright ;

Richard his letters read with much delight ;  
 George from his pillow rose in happy tone,  
 His bosom's lord sat lightly on his throne :  
 They read the morning news—they saw thesky  
 Inviting call'd them, and the earth was dry.

' The day invites us, brother,' said the  
 'squire ;

' Come, and I'll show thee something to  
 admire :

We still may beauty in our prospects trace ;  
 If not, we have them in both mind and face.

' 'Tis but two miles—to let such women live  
 Unseen of him, what reason can I give ?

Why should not Richard to the girls be  
 known ?

Would I have all their friendship for my own ?

Brother, there dwell, yon northern hill below,  
 Two favourite maidens, whom 'tis good to  
 know ;

Young, but experienced ; dwellers in a  
 cot,

Where they sustain and dignify their lot,  
 The best good girls in all our world below—  
 O ! you must know them—Come ! and you  
 shall know.

' But lo ! the morning wastes—here, Jacob,  
 stir—

If Phoebe comes, do you attend to her ;  
 And let not Mary get a chattering press  
 Of idle girls to hear of her distress :  
 Ask her to wait till my return—and hide  
 From her meek mind your plenty and your  
 pride ;

Nor vex a creature, humble, sad, and still,  
 By your coarse bounty, and your rude good-  
 will.'

This said, the brothers hasten'd on their  
 way,

With all the foretaste of a pleasant day.  
 The morning purpose in the mind had fix'd  
 The leading thought, and that with others  
 mix'd.

'How well it is,' said George, 'when we possess  
The strength that bears us up in our distress ;  
And need not the resources of our pride,  
Our fall from greatness and our wants to hide ;  
But have the spirit and the wish to show,  
We know our wants as well as others know.  
'Tis true, the rapid turns of fortune's wheel  
Make even the virtuous and the humble feel :  
They for a time must suffer, and but few  
Can bear their sorrows and our pity too.

'Hence all these small expedients, day by day,  
Are used to hide the evils they betray :  
When, if our pity chances to be seen,  
The wounded pride retorts, with anger keen,  
And man's insulted grief takes refuge in  
his spleen.

'When Timon's board contains a single dish,  
Timon talks much of market-men and fish,  
Forgetful servants, and th' infernal cook,  
Who always spoil'd whate'er she undertook.

'But say, it tries us from our height to fall,  
Yet is not life itself a trial all ?  
And not a virtue in the bosom lives,  
That gives such ready pay as patience gives ;  
That pure submission to the ruling mind,  
Fix'd, but not forced ; obedient, but not  
blind ;

The will of heaven to make her own she tries,  
Or makes her own to heaven a sacrifice.

'And is there aught on earth so rich or rare,  
Whose pleasures may with virtue's pains  
compare ?

This fruit of patience, this the pure delight,  
That 'tis a trial in her Judge's sight ;  
Her part still striving duty to sustain,  
Not spurning pleasure, not defying pain ;  
Never in triumph till her race be won,  
And never fainting till her work be done.'

With thoughts like these they reach'd the  
village brook,

And saw a lady sitting with her book ;  
And so engaged she heard not, till the men  
Were at her side, nor was she frighten'd then ;  
But to her friend, the 'squire, his smile  
return'd,

Through which the latent sadness he discern'd.

The stranger-brother at the cottage door  
Was now admitted, and was strange no more :  
Then of an absent sister he was told,  
Whom they were not at present to behold ;

Something was said of nerves, and that disease,  
Whose varying powers on mind and body  
seize,

Enfeebling both !—Here chose they to remain  
One hour in peace, and then return'd again.

'I know not why,' said Richard, 'but I feel  
The warmest pity on my bosom steal  
For that dear maid ! How well her looks  
express

For this world's good a cherish'd hopelessness !

A resignation that is so entire,  
It feels not now the stirrings of desire ;  
What now to her is all the world esteems ?  
She is awake, and cares not for its dreams ;  
But moves while yet on earth, as one above  
Its hopes and fears—its loathing and its love.

'But shall I learn,' said he, 'these sisters'  
fate ?'—

And found his brother willing to relate.

'The girls were orphans early ; yet I saw,  
When young, their father—his profession law ;  
He left them but a competence, a store  
That made his daughters neither rich nor  
poor ;

Not rich, compared with some who dwelt  
around ;

Not poor, for want they neither fear'd nor  
found ;

Their guardian uncle was both kind and just,  
One whom a parent might in dying trust ;  
Who, in their youth, the trusted store improved,

And, when he ceased to guide them, fondly  
loved.

'These sister beauties were in fact the grace  
Of yon small town,—it was their native place ;  
Like Saul's famed daughters were the lovely  
twain,

As Micah, Lucy, and as Merab, Jane :  
For this was tall, with free commanding air,  
And that was mild, and delicate, and fair.

'Jane had an arch delusive smile, that  
charm'd

And threaten'd too ; alluring, it alarm'd ;  
The smile of Lucy her approval told,  
Cheerful, not changing ; neither kind nor  
cold.

'When children, Lucy love alone possess'd,  
Jane was more punish'd and was more  
caress'd ;

If told the childish wishes, one bespoke  
A lamb, a bird, a garden, and a brook ;  
The other wish'd a joy unknown, a rout  
Or crowded ball, and to be first led out.

'Lucy loved all that grew upon the ground,  
And loveliness in all things living found ;  
The gilded fly, the fern upon the wall,  
Were nature's works, and admirable all ;  
Pleased with indulgence of so cheap a kind,  
Its cheapness never discomposed her mind.

'Jane had no liking for such things as these,  
Things pleasing her must her superiors please ;  
The costly flower was precious in her eyes,  
That skill can vary, or that money buys ;  
Her taste was good, but she was still afraid,  
Till fashion sanction'd the remarks she made.

'The sisters read, and Jane with some  
delight,

The satires keen that fear or rage excite,  
That men in power attack, and ladies high,  
And give broad hints that we may know  
them by.

She was amused when sent to haunted rooms,  
Or some dark passage where the spirit comes  
Of one once murder'd ! then she laughing  
read,

And felt at once the folly and the dread :  
As rustic girls to crafty gipsies fly,  
And trust the liar though they fear the lie,  
Or as a patient, urged by grievous pains,  
Will fee the daring quack whom he disdains,  
So Jane was pleased to see the beckoning  
hand,

And trust the magic of the Ratchliffe-wand.

'In her religion—for her mind, though light,  
Was not disposed our better views to slight—  
Her favourite authors were a solemn kind,  
Who fill with dark mysterious thoughts the  
mind ;

And who with such conceits her fancy plied,  
Became her friend, philosopher, and guide.

'She made the Progress of the Pilgrim one  
To build a thousand pleasant views upon ;  
All that connects us with a world above  
She loved to fancy, and she long'd to prove ;  
Well would the poet please her, who could  
lead

Her fancy forth, yet keep untouch'd her  
creed.

Led by an early custom, Lucy spied,  
When she awaked, the Bible at her side ;  
That, ere she ventured on a world of care,  
She might for trials, joys or pains prepare,

For every dart a shield, a guard for every  
snare.

'She read not much of high heroic deeds,  
Where man the measure of man's power  
exceeds ;

But gave to luckless love and fate severe  
Her tenderest pity and her softest tear.

'She mix'd not faith with fable, but she  
trod

Right onward, cautious in the ways of God ;  
Nor did she dare to launch on seas unknown,  
In search of truths by some adventurers  
shown,

But her own compass used, and kept a course  
her own.

'The maidens both their loyalty declared,  
And in the glory of their country shared ;  
But Jane that glory felt with proud delight,  
When England's foes were vanquish'd in the  
fight ;

While Lucy's feelings for the brave who bled  
Put all such glorious triumphs from her head.  
They both were frugal ; Lucy from the fear  
Of wasting that which want esteems so dear,  
But finds so scarce, her sister from the pain  
That springs from want, when treated with  
disdain.

'Jane borrow'd maxims from a doubting  
school,

And took for truth the test of ridicule ;

Lucy saw no such virtue in a jest,

Truth was with her of ridicule a test.

'They loved each other with the warmth  
of youth,

With ardour, candour, tenderness, and truth ;  
And though their pleasures were not just the  
same,

Yet both were pleased whenever one became ;  
Nay, each would rather in the act rejoice,  
That was th' adopted, not the native choice.

'Each had a friend, and friends to minds  
so fond

And good are soon united in the bond ;  
Each had a lover ; but it seem'd that fate  
Decreed that these should not approximate.  
Now Lucy's lover was a prudent swain,  
And thought, in all things, what would be  
his gain ;

The younger sister first engaged his view,  
But with her beauty he her spirit knew ;  
Her face he much admired, "but, put the  
case,"

Said he, "I marry, what is then a face ?

At first it pleases to have drawn the lot;  
He then forgets it, but his wife does not;  
Jane too," he judged, "would be reserved  
and nice,

And many lovers had enhanced her price."

'Thus thinking much, but hiding what he  
thought,

The prudent lover Lucy's favour sought,  
And he succeeded,—she was free from art;  
And his appear'd a gentle guileless heart;  
Such she respected; true, her sister found  
His placid face too ruddy and too round,  
Too cold and inexpressive; such a face  
Where you could nothing mark'd or manly  
trace.

'But Lucy found him to his mother kind,  
And saw the Christian meekness of his mind;  
His voice was soft, his temper mild and sweet,  
His mind was easy, and his person neat.  
Jane said he wanted courage; Lucy drew  
No ill from that, though she believed it  
too;

"It is religious, Jane, be not severe;"

"Well, Lucy, then it is religious fear."

Nor could the sister, great as was her love,  
A man so lifeless and so cool approve.

'Jane had a lover, whom a lady's pride  
Might wish to see attending at her side,  
Young, handsome, sprightly, and with good  
address,

Not mark'd for folly, error or excess;  
Yet not entirely from their censure free,  
Who judge our failings with severity;  
The very care he took to keep his name  
Stainless, with some was evidence of shame.

'Jane heard of this, and she replied,  
"Enough;

Prove but the facts, and I resist not proof;  
Nor is my heart so easy as to love  
The man my judgment bids me not approve."  
But yet that heart a secret joy confess'd,  
To find no slander on the youth would rest;  
His was, in fact, such conduct, that a maid  
Might think of marriage, and be not afraid;  
And she was pleased to find a spirit high,  
Free from all fear, that spurn'd hypocrisy.

"What fears my sister?" said the partial  
fair,

For Lucy fear'd,—“Why tell me to beware?  
No smooth deceitful varnish can I find;  
His is a spirit generous, free, and kind;  
And all his flaws are seen, all floating in his  
mind.

A little boldness in his speech. What then?  
It is the failing of these generous men.

A little vanity, but—O! my dear,

They all would show it, were they all sincere.

"But come, agreed; we'll lend each other  
eyes

To see our favourites, when they wear dis-  
guise;

And all those errors that will then be shown  
Uninfluenced by the workings of our own."

'Thus lived the sisters, far from power  
removed,

And far from need, both loving and beloved.  
Thus grew, as myrtles grow; I grieve at  
heart

That I have pain and sorrow to impart.

But so it is, the sweetest herbs that grow  
In the lone vale, where sweetest waters flow,  
Ere drops the blossom, or appears the fruit,  
Feel the vile grub, and perish at the root;  
And in a quick and premature decay,  
Breathe the pure fragrance of their life away.

'A town was near, in which the buildings all  
Were large, but one pre-eminently tall—  
An huge high house. Without there was an  
air

Of lavish cost; no littleness was there;  
But room for servants, horses, whiskies, gigs,  
And walls for pines and peaches, grapes and  
figs;

Bright on the sloping glass the sun-beams  
shone,

And brought the summer of all climates on.

'Here wealth its prowess to the eye dis-  
play'd,

And here advanced the seasons, there delay'd;  
Bid the due heat each growing sweet refine,  
Made the sun's light with grosser fire combine,  
And to the Tropic gave the vigour of the Line.

'Yet, in the master of this wealth, behold  
A light vain coxcomb taken from his gold,  
Whose busy brain was weak, whose boasting  
heart was cold.

'O! how he talk'd to that believing town,  
That he would give it riches and renown;  
Cause a canal where treasures were to swim,  
And they should owe their opulence to him  
In fact, of riches he insured a crop,  
So they would give him but a seed to drop.  
As used the alchymist his boasts to make,  
"I give you millions for the mite I take;"  
The mite they never could again behold,  
The millions all were Eldorado gold.

' By this professing man, the country round  
Was search'd to see where money could be  
found.

' The thriven farmer, who had lived to  
spare,  
Became an object of especial care ;  
He took the frugal tradesman by the hand,  
And wish'd him joy of what he might com-  
mand ;

And the industrious servant, who had laid  
His saving by, it was his joy to aid ;  
Large talk, and hints of some productive plan  
Half named, won all his hearers to a man ;  
Uncertain projects drew them wondering on,  
And avarice listen'd till distrust was gone.  
But when to these dear girls he found his way,  
All easy, artless, innocent were they ;  
When he compell'd his foolish wife to be  
At once so great, so humble, and so free ;  
Whom others sought, nor always with suc-  
cess !

But they were both her pride and happiness ;  
And she esteem'd them, but attended still  
To the vile purpose of her husband's will ;  
And when she fix'd his snares about their  
mind,

Respected those whom she essay'd to blind ;  
Nay with esteem she some compassion gave  
To the fair victims whom she would not save.

' The Banker's wealth and kindness were  
her themes,

His generous plans, his patriotic schemes ;  
What he had done for some, a favourite few,  
What for his favourites still he meant to do ;  
Not that he always listen'd—which was  
hard—

To her, when speaking of her great regard  
For certain friends—" but you, as I may say,  
Are his own choice—I am not jealous—nay !"

' Then came the man himself, and came  
with speed

As just from business of importance freed ;  
Or just escaping, came with looks of fire,  
As if he'd just attain'd his full desire ;  
As if Prosperity and he for life  
Were wed, and he was showing off his wife ;  
Pleased to display his influence, and to prove  
Himself the object of her partial love :  
Perhaps with this was join'd the latent fear,  
The time would come when he should not be  
dear.

' Jane laugh'd at all their visits and parade,  
And call'd it friendship in an hot-house made ;

A style of friendship suited to his taste,  
Brought on, and ripen'd, like his grapes, in  
haste ;

She saw the wants that wealth in vain would  
hide,

And all the tricks and littleness of pride ;  
On all the wealth would creep the vulgar  
stain,

And grandeur strove to look itself in vain.

' Lucy perceived—but she replied, " why  
heed

Such small defects ?—they're very kind in-  
deed ! "

And kind they were, and ready to produce  
Their easy friendship, ever fit for use,  
Friendship that enters into all affairs,  
And daily wants, and daily gets, repairs.  
Hence at the cottage of the sisters stood  
The Banker's steed—he was so very good ;  
Off through the roads, in weather foul and fair,  
Their friend's gay carriage bore the gentle  
pair ;

His grapes and nectarines woo'd the virgins'  
hand,

His books and roses were at their command ;  
And costly flowers,—he took upon him shame  
That he could purchase what he could not  
name.

' Lucy was vex'd to have such favours  
shown,

And they returning nothing of their own ;  
Jane smiled, and begg'd her sister to believe—  
" We give at least as much as we receive."

' Alas ! and more ; they gave their ears  
and eyes,

His splendor oft-times took them by surprise ;  
And if in Jane appear'd a meaning smile,  
She gazed, admired, and paid respect the  
while ;

Would she had rested there ! Deluded maid,  
She saw not yet the fatal price she paid ;  
Saw not that wealth, though join'd with folly,  
grew

In her regard ; she smiled, but listen'd too ;  
Nay, would be grateful, she would trust her all,  
Her funded source,—to him a matter small ;  
Taken for their sole use, and ever at their call :  
To be improved—he knew not how indeed ;  
But he had methods—and they must succeed.

' This was so good, that Jane, in very pride,  
To spare him trouble, for a while denied ;  
And Lucy's prudence, though it was alarm'd,  
Was by the splendor of the Banker charm'd ;

What was her paltry thousand pounds to him,  
Who would expend five thousand on a  
whim?

And then the portion of his wife was known;  
But not that she reserved it for her own.

'Lucy her lover trusted with the fact,  
And frankly ask'd, "if he approved the act!"  
"It promised well," he said; "he could  
not tell

How it might end, but sure it promised well;  
He had himself a trifle in the Bank,  
And should be sore uneasy if it sank."

'Jane from her lover had no wish to hide  
Her deed; but was withheld by maiden pride;  
To talk so early—as if one were sure  
Of being his; she could not that endure.  
But when the sisters were apart, and when  
They freely spoke of their affairs and men;  
They thought with pleasure of the sum im-  
proved,

And so presented to the men they loved.

'Things now proceeded in a quiet train;  
No cause appear'd to murmur or complain;  
The monied man, his ever-smiling dame,  
And their young darlings, in their carriage  
came;

Jane's sprightly lover smiled their pomp to  
see,

And ate their grapes, with gratitude and glee,  
But with the freedom there was nothing mean,  
Humble, or forward, in his freedom seen;  
His was the frankness of a mind that shows  
It knows itself, nor fears for what it knows:  
But Lucy's ever humble friend was awed  
By the profusion he could not applaud;  
He seem'd indeed reluctant to partake  
Of the collation that he could not make;  
And this was pleasant in the maiden's view,—  
Was modesty—was moderation too;  
Though Jane esteem'd it meanness; and she  
saw

Fear in that prudence, avarice in that awe.

'But both the lovers now to town are  
gone,

By business one is call'd, by duty one;  
While rumour rises,—whether false or true  
The ladies knew not—it was known to few—  
But fear there was, and on their guardian-  
friend

They for advice and comfort would depend,  
When rose the day; meantime from Belmont-  
place

Came vile report, predicting quick disgrace.

'Twas told—the servants, who had met  
to thank

Their lord for placing money in his Bank—  
Their kind free master, who such wages gave,  
And then increased whatever they could save,  
They who had heard they should their savings  
lose,

Were weeping, swearing, drinking at the news;  
And still the more they drank, the more they  
wept,

And swore, and rail'd, and threaten'd, till  
they slept.

'The morning truth confirm'd the evening  
dread;

The Bank was broken, and the Banker fled;  
But left a promise that his friends should have,  
To the last shilling—what his fortunes gave.

'The evil tidings reach'd the sister-pair,  
And one like Sorrow look'd, and one Despair;  
They from each other turn'd th' afflicting  
look,

And loth and late the painful silence broke.

"The odious villain!" Jane in wrath  
began;

In pity Lucy, "the unhappy man!  
When time and reason our affliction heal,  
How will the author of our sufferings feel?"

"And let him feel, my sister,—let the  
woes

That he creates be bane to his repose!  
Let them be felt in his expiring hour,  
When death brings all his dread, and sin its  
power:

Then let the busy foe of mortals state  
The pangs he caused, his own to aggravate!

"Wretch! when our life was glad, our  
prospects gay,

With savage hand to sweep them all away!  
And he must know it—know when he beguiled  
His easy victims—how the villain smiled!

"Oh! my dear Lucy, could I see him  
crave

The food denied, a beggar and a slave,  
To stony hearts he should with tears apply,  
And Pity's self withhold the struggling sigh;  
Or, if relenting weakness should extend  
Th' extorted scrap that justice would not  
lend,

Let it be poison'd by the curses deep  
Of every wretch whom he compels to weep!"

"Nay, my sweet sister, if you thought  
such pain

Were his, your pity would awake again;

Your generous heart the wretch's grief would feel,  
And you would soothe the pangs you could not heal."

"Oh! never, never,—I would still contrive

To keep the slave whom I abhorred alive;  
His tortured mind with horrid fears to fill,  
Disturb his reason, and misguide his will;  
Heap coals of fire, to lie like melted lead,  
Heavy and hot, on his accursed head;  
Not coals that mercy kindles hearts to melt,  
But he should feel them hot as fires are felt;  
Corroding ever, and through life the same,  
Strong self-contempt and ever-burning shame;  
Let him so wretched live that he may fly  
To desperate thoughts, and be resolved to die—

And then let death such frightful visions give,  
That he may dread th' attempt, and beg to live!"

So spake th' indignant maid, when Lucy sigh'd,

And, waiting softer times, no more replied.

Barlow was then in town; and there he thought

Of bliss to come, and bargains to be bought;  
And was returning homeward—when he found

The Bank was broken, and his venture drown'd.

"Ah! foolish maid," he cried, "and what wilt thou

Say for thy friends and their excesses now?  
All now is brought completely to an end;  
What can the spendthrift now afford to spend?

Had my advice been—true, I gave consent,  
The thing was purposed; what could I prevent?

"Who will her idle taste for flowers supply,—

Who send her grapes and peaches? let her try;—

There's none will give her, and she cannot buy.

"Yet would she not be grateful if she knew

What to my faith and generous love was due?  
Daily to see the man who took her hand,  
When she had not a sixpence at command;  
Could I be sure that such a quiet mind  
Would be for ever grateful, mild, and kind,

I might comply—but how will Bloomer act,  
When he becomes acquainted with the fact?  
The loss to him is trifling—but the fall  
From independence, that to her is all;  
Now should he marry, 'twill be shame to me  
To hold myself from my engagement free;  
And should he not, it will be double grace  
To stand alone in such a trying case.

"Come then, my Lucy, to thy faithful heart

And humble love I will my views impart;  
Will see the grateful tear that softly steals  
Down the fair face and all thy joy reveals;  
And when I say it is a blow severe,  
Then will I add—restrain, my love, the tear,  
And take this heart, so faithful and so fond,  
Still bound to thine; and fear not for that bond."

'He said; and went, with purpose he believed

Of generous nature—so is man deceived.

'Lucy determined that her lover's eye

Should not distress nor supplication spy;  
That in her manner he should nothing find,  
To indicate the weakness of her mind.

He saw no eye that wept, no frame that shook,

No fond appeal was made by word or look;  
Kindness there was, but join'd with some restraint;

And traces of the late event were faint.

'He look'd for grief deploring, but perceives

No outward token that she longer grieves;  
He had expected for his efforts praise,  
For he resolved the drooping mind to raise;  
She would, he judged, be humble, and afraid  
That he might blame her rashness and upbraid;

And lo! he finds her in a quiet state,  
Her spirit easy and her air sedate;  
As if her loss was not a cause for pain,  
As if assured that he would make it gain.—

'Silent awhile, he told the morning news,  
And what he judged they might expect to lose;

He thought himself, whatever some might boast,

The composition would be small at most;  
Some shabby matter, she would see no more  
The tithe of what she held in hand before.

'How did her sister feel? and did she think

Bloomer was honest, and would never shrink?



“But why that smile? is loss like yours  
so light

That it can aught like merriment excite?  
Well, he is rich, we know, and can afford  
To please his fancy, and to keep his word;  
To him 'tis nothing; had he now a fear,  
He must the meanest of his sex appear;  
But the true honour, as I judge the case,  
Is, both to feel the evil, and embrace.”

“Here Barlow stopp'd, a little vex'd to see  
No fear or hope, no dread or ecstasy:  
Calmly she spoke—“Your prospects, sir, and  
mine

Are not the same,—their union I decline;  
Could I believe the hand for which you strove  
Had yet its value, did you truly love,  
I had with thanks address'd you, and replied,  
Wait till your feelings and my own subside,  
Watch your affections, and, if still they live,  
What pride denies, my gratitude shall give;  
Ev'n then, in yielding, I had first believed  
That I conferr'd the favour, not received.

“You I release—nay, hear me—I impart  
Joy to your soul,—I judge not of your heart.  
Think'st thou a being, to whom God has lent  
A feeling mind, will have her bosom rent  
By man's reproaches? Sorrow will be thine,  
For all thy pity prompts thee to resign!  
Think'st thou that meekness' self would con-  
descend

To take the husband when she scorns the  
friend?

Forgive the frankness, and rejoice for life,  
Thou art not burden'd with so poor a wife.

“Go! and be happy—tell, for the applause  
Of hearts like thine, we parted, and the cause  
Give, as it pleases.” With a foolish look  
That a dull school-boy fixes on his book  
That he resigns, with mingled shame and joy;  
So Barlow went, confounded like the boy.

“Jane, while she wept to think her sister's  
pain

Was thus increased, felt infinite disdain;  
Bound as she was, and wedded by the ties  
Of love and hope, that care and craft despise;  
She could but wonder that a man, whose taste  
And zeal for money had a Jew disgraced,  
Should love her sister; yet with this surprise,  
She felt a little exultation rise;  
Hers was a lover who had always held  
This man as base, by generous scorn impell'd;  
And yet, as one, of whom for Lucy's sake  
He would a civil distant notice take.

“Lucy, with sadden'd heart and temper  
mild,

Bow'd to correction, like an humbled child,  
Who feels the parent's kindness, and who  
knows

Such the correction he, who loves, bestows.  
“Attending always, but attending more  
When sorrow ask'd his presence, than before,  
Tender and ardent, with the kindest air  
Came Bloomer, fortune's error to repair;  
Words sweetly soothing spoke the happy  
youth,

With all the tender earnestness of truth.

“There was no doubt of his intention now—  
He will his purpose with his love avow:  
So judged the maid; yet, waiting, she ad-  
mired

His still delaying what he most desired;  
Till, from her spirit's agitation free,  
She might determine when the day should be.  
With such facility the partial mind  
Can the best motives for its favourites find.  
Of this he spake not, but he stay'd beyond  
His usual hour;—attentive still and fond;—  
The hand yet firmer to the hand he prest,  
And the eye rested where it loved to rest;  
Then took he certain freedoms, yet so small  
That it was prudish so the things to call;  
Things they were not—“Describe”—that  
none can do,

They had been nothing had they not been  
new;

It was the manner and the look; a maid,  
Afraid of such, is foolishly afraid;  
For what could she explain? The piercing eye  
Of jealous fear could nought amiss descry.

“But some concern now rose; the youth  
would seek

Jane by herself, and then would nothing  
speak,

Before not spoken; there was still delay,  
Vexatious, wearying, wasting, day by day.

“He does not surely trifle!” Heaven  
forbid!

She now should doubly scorn him if he did.  
“Ah! more than this, unlucky girl! is  
thine;

Thou must the fondest views of life resign;  
And in the very time resign them too,  
When they were brightening on the eager view.

I will be brief,—nor have I heart to dwell  
On crimes they almost share who paint them  
well.

'There was a moment's softness, and it seem'd

Discretion slept, or so the lover dream'd ;  
And watching long the now confiding maid,  
He thought her guardless, and grew less afraid ;

Led to the theme that he had shunn'd before,  
He used a language he must use no more—  
For if it answers, there is no more need,  
And no more trial, should it not succeed.

'Then made he that attempt, in which to fail

Is shameful,—still more shameful to prevail.

'Then was there lightning in that eye that shed

Its beams upon him,—and his frenzy fled ;  
Abject and trembling at her feet he laid,  
Despised and scorn'd by the indignant maid,  
Whose spirits in their agitation rose,  
Him, and her own weak pity, to oppose :  
As liquid silver in the tube mounts high,  
Then shakes and settles as the storm goes by.  
While yet the lover stay'd, the maid was strong,

But when he fled, she droop'd and felt the wrong—

Felt the alarming chill, th' enfeebled breath,  
Closed the quick eye, and sank in transient death.

So Lucy found her ; and then first that breast  
Knew anger's power, and own'd the stranger guest.

"And is this love ? Ungenerous ! Has he too

Been mean and abject ? Is no being true ?"  
For Lucy judged that, like her prudent swain,  
Bloomer had talk'd of what a man might gain ;

She did not think a man on earth was found,  
A wounded bosom, while it bleeds, to wound ;  
Thought not that mortal could be so unjust,  
As to deprive affliction of its trust ;  
Thought not a lover could the hope enjoy,  
That must the peace, he should promote, destroy ;

Thought not, in fact, that in the world were those,

Who, to their tenderest friends, are worse than foes,

Who win the heart, deprive it of its care,  
Then plant remorse and desolation there.

'Ah ! cruel he, who can that heart deprive  
Of all that keeps its energy alive ;

Can see consign'd to shame the trusting fair,  
And turn confiding fondness to despair ;  
To watch that time—a name is not assign'd  
For crime so odious, nor shall learning find.  
Now, from that day has Lucy laid aside  
Her proper cares, to be her sister's guide,  
Guard, and protector. At their uncle's farm  
They past the period of their first alarm,  
But soon retired, nor was he grieved to learn  
They made their own affairs their own concern.

'I knew not then their worth ; and, had I known,

Could not the kindness of a friend have shown ;  
For men they dreaded ; they a dwelling sought,

And there the children of the village taught ;  
There, firm and patient, Lucy still depends  
Upon her efforts, not upon her friends ;  
She is with persevering strength endued,  
And can be cheerful—for she will be good.

'Jane too will strive the daily tasks to share,

That so employment may contend with care ;  
Not power, but will, she shows, and looks about

On her small people, who come in and out ;  
And seems of what they need, or she can do, in doubt.

There sits the chubby crew on seats around,  
While she, all rueful at the sight and sound,  
Shrinks from the free approaches of the tribe,  
Whom she attempts lamenting to describe,  
With stains the idlers gather'd in their way,  
The simple stains of mud, and mould, and clay,

And compound of the streets, of what we dare not say ;

With hair uncomb'd, grimed face, and piteous look,

Each heavy student takes the odious book,  
And on the lady casts a glance of fear,  
Who draws the garment close as he comes near ;

She then for Lucy's mild forbearance tries,  
And from her pupils turns her brilliant eyes,  
Making new efforts, and with some success,  
To pay attention while the students guess ;  
Who to the gentler mistress fain would glide,  
And dread their station at the lady's side.

'Such is their fate :—there is a friendly few

Whom they receive, and there is chance for you ;

Their school, and something gather'd from the wreck

Of that bad Bank, keeps poverty in check ;  
And true respect, and high regard, are theirs,  
The children's profit, and the parents' prayers.  
With Lucy rests the one peculiar care,  
That few must see, and none with her may share ;

More dear than hope can be, more sweet than pleasures are.

For her sad sister needs the care of love  
That will direct her, that will not reprove,  
But waits to warn : for Jane will walk alone,  
Will sing in low and melancholy tone ;  
Will read or write, or to her plants will run  
To shun her friends,—alas ! her thoughts to shun.

' It is not love alone disturbs her rest,  
But loss of all that ever hope possess'd ;  
Friends ever kind, life's lively pleasures, ease,  
When her enjoyments could no longer please ;  
These were her comforts then ! she has no more of these.

' Wrapt in such thoughts, she feels her mind astray,

But knows 'tis true, that she has lost her way ;  
For Lucy's smile will check the sudden flight,  
And one kind look let in the wonted light.

' Fits of long silence she endures, then talks  
Too much—with too much ardour, as she walks ;

But still the shrubs that she admires dispense  
Their balmy freshness to the hurried sense,  
And she will watch their progress, and attend  
Her flowering favourites as a guardian friend ;  
To sun or shade she will her sweets remove,  
" And here," she says, " I may with safety love."

' But there are hours when on that bosom steals

A rising terror,—then indeed she feels ;—  
Feels how she loved the promised good, and how

She feels the failure of the promise now.

" That other spoiler did as robbers do,  
Made poor our state, but not disgraceful too.  
This spoiler shames me, and I look within  
To find some cause that drew him on to sin ;  
He and the wretch who could thy worth forsake

Are the fork'd adder and the loathsome snake ;  
Thy snake could slip in villain-fear away,  
But had no fang to fasten on his prey.

" Oh ! my dear Lucy, I had thought to live  
With all the comforts easy fortunes give ;  
A wife caressing, and caress'd,—a friend,  
Whom he would guide, advise, consult, defend,  
And make his equal ;—then I fondly thought  
Among superior creatures to be brought ;  
And while with them, delighted to behold  
No eye averted, and no bosom cold ;—  
Then at my home, a mother, to embrace  
My—Oh ! my sister, it was surely base !  
I might forget the wrong ; I cannot the disgrace.

" Oh ! when I saw that triumph in his eyes,

I felt my spirits with his own arise ;  
I call'd it joy, and said, the generous youth  
Laughs at my loss—no trial for his truth ;  
It is a trifle he can not lament,  
A sum but equal to his annual rent ;  
And yet that loss, the cause of every ill,  
Has made me poor, and him—"

" O ! poorer still ;  
Poorer, my Jane, and far below thee now :  
The injurer he,—the injured sufferer thou ;  
And shall such loss afflict thee ?"—

" Lose I not  
With him what fortune could in life allot ?  
Lose I not hope, life's cordial, and the views  
Of an aspiring spirit ?—O ! I lose  
Whate'er the happy feel, whate'er the sanguine choose.

" Would I could lose this bitter sense of wrong,  
And sleep in peace—but it will not be long !  
And here is something, Lucy, in my braid,  
I know not what—it is a cure for pain ;  
But is not death !—no beckoning hand I see,  
No voice I hear that comes alone to me ;  
It is not death, but change ; I am not now  
As I was once,—nor can I tell you how ;  
Nor is it madness—ask, and you shall find  
In my replies the soundness of my mind :  
O ! I should be a trouble all day long ;  
A very torment, if my head were wrong."

' At times there is upon her features seen,  
What moves suspicion—she is too serene.  
Such is the motion of a drunken man,  
Who steps sedately, just to show he can.  
Absent at times she will her mother call,  
And cry at mid-day, " then good night to all."  
But most she thinks there will some good ensue

From something done, or what she is to do ;

long wrapt in silence, she will then assume  
 An air of business, and shake off her gloom;  
 Then cry exulting, "O! it must succeed,  
 There are ten thousand readers—all men read:  
 There are my writings,—you shall never spend  
 Your precious moments to so poor an end;  
 Our peasants' children may be taught by those,  
 Who have no powers such wonders to compose;  
 So let me call them,—what the world allows,  
 Surely a poet without shame avows;  
 Come, let us count what numbers we believe  
 Will buy our work—Ah! sister, do you grieve?  
 You weep; there's something I have said  
 amiss,

And vex'd my sister—What a world is this!  
 And how I wander!—Where has fancy run?  
 Is there no poem? Have I nothing done?  
 Forgive me, Lucy, I had fix'd my eye,  
 And so my mind, on works that cannot die;  
*Marmion* and *Lara* yonder in the case,  
 And so I put me in the poet's place.

"Still, be not frighten'd; it is but a  
 dream;

I am not lost, bewilder'd though I seem;  
 I will obey thee—but suppress thy fear—  
 I am at ease,—then why that silly tear?"

"Jane, as these melancholy fits invade  
 The busy fancy, seeks the deepest shade;  
 She walks in ceaseless hurry, till her mind  
 Will short repose in verse and music find;  
 Then her own songs to some soft lute shesings,  
 And laughs, and calls them melancholy things;  
 Not frenzy all; in some her erring Muse  
 Will sad, afflicting, tender strains infuse:  
 Sometimes on death she will her lines compose,  
 Or give her serious page of solemn prose;  
 And still those favourite plants her fancy  
 please,

And give to care and anguish rest and ease.

"Let me not have this gloomy view,  
 About my room, around my bed;  
 But morning roses, wet with dew,  
 To cool my burning brows instead.  
 As flowers that once in Eden grew,  
 Let them their fragrant spirits shed,  
 And every day the sweets renew,  
 Till I, a fading flower, am dead.

"Oh! let the herbs I loved to rear  
 Give to my sense their perfumed breath;  
 Let them be placed about my bier,  
 And grace the gloomy house of death.

I'll have my grave beneath an hill,  
 Where, only Lucy's self shall know;  
 Where runs the pure pellucid rill  
 Upon its gravely bed below;  
 There violets on the borders blow,  
 And insects their soft light display,  
 Till, as the morning sun-beams glow,  
 The cold phosphoric fires decay.

"That is the grave to Lucy shown,  
 The soil a pure and silver sand,  
 The green cold moss above it grown,  
 Unpluck'd of all but maiden hand:  
 In virgin earth, till then unturn'd,  
 There let my maiden form be laid,  
 Nor let my changed clay be spurned,  
 Nor for new guest that bed be made.

"There will the lark,—the lamb, in sport,  
 In air,—on earth,—securely play,  
 And Lucy to my grave resort,  
 As innocent, but not so gay.  
 I will not have the churchyard ground,  
 With bones all black and ugly grown,  
 To press my shivering body round,  
 Or on my wasted limbs be thrown.

"With ribs and skulls I will not sleep,  
 In clammy beds of cold blue clay,  
 Through which the ring'd earth-worms  
 creep,  
 And on the shrouded bosom prey;  
 I will not have the bell proclaim  
 When those sad marriage rites begin,  
 And boys, without regard or shame,  
 Press the vile mouldering masses in.

"Say not, it is beneath my care;  
 I cannot these cold truths allow;  
 These thoughts may not afflict me there,  
 But, O! they vex and tease me now.  
 Raise not a turf, nor set a stone,  
 That man a maiden's grave may trace,  
 But thou, my Lucy, come alone,  
 And let affection find the place.

"O! take me from a world I hate,  
 Men cruel, selfish, sensual, cold;  
 And, in some pure and blessed state,  
 Let me my sister minds behold:  
 From gross and sordid views refined,  
 Our heaven of spotless love to share,  
 For only generous souls design'd,  
 And not a man to meet us there."

## BOOK IX. THE PRECEPTOR HUSBAND

The Morning Ride—Conversation—Character of one whom they meet—His early Habits and Mode of thinking—The Wife whom he would choose—The one chosen—His Attempts to teach—In History—In Botany—The Lady's Proficiency—His Complaint—Her Defence and Triumph—The Trial ends.

'WHOM pass'd we musing near the wood-  
man's shed,  
Whose horse not only carried him but led,  
That his grave rider might have slept the  
time,

Or solved a problem, or composed a rhyme ?  
A more abstracted man within my view  
Has never come—He recollected you.'

'Yes,—he was thoughtful—thinks the  
whole day long,  
Deeply, and chiefly that he once thought  
wrong ;

He thought a strong and kindred mind to  
trace

In the soft outlines of a trifier's face.

' Poor Finch ! I knew him when at school  
—a boy

Who might be said his labours to enjoy ;  
So young a pedant that he always took  
The girl to dance who most admired her book ;  
And would the butler and the cook surprise,  
Who listen'd to his Latin exercise ;  
The matron's self the praise of Finch avow'd,  
He was so serious, and he read so loud :  
But yet, with all this folly and conceit,  
The lines he wrote were elegant and neat ;  
And early promise in his mind appear'd  
Of noble efforts when by reason clear'd.

' And when he spoke of wives, the boy  
would say,

His should be skill'd in Greek and algebra ;  
For who would talk with one to whom his  
themes,

And favourite studies, were no more than  
dreams ?

For this, though courteous, gentle, and  
humane,

The boys contemn'd and hated him as vain,  
Stiff and pedantic.—'

' Did the man enjoy,  
In after life, the visions of the boy ? '

' At least they form'd his wishes, they were  
yet

The favourite views on which his mind was  
set :

He quaintly said, how happy must they prove,  
Who, loving, study—or who, studious, love ;  
Who feel their minds with sciences imbued,  
And their warm hearts by beauty's force  
subdued.

' His widow'd mother, who the world had  
seen,

And better judge of either sex had been,  
Told him that just as their affairs were placed,  
In some respects, he must forego his taste ;  
That every beauty, both of form and mind,  
Must be by him, if unendow'd, resign'd ;  
That wealth was wanted for their joint affairs ;  
His sisters' portions, and the Hall's repairs.

' The son assented—and the wife must bring  
Wealth, learning, beauty, ere he gave the  
ring ;

But as these merits, when they all unite,  
Are not produced in every soil and site ;  
And when produced are not the certain gain  
Of him who would these precious things  
obtain ;

Our patient student waited many a year,  
Nor saw this phoenix in his walks appear.  
But as views mended in the joint estate,  
He would a something in his points abate ;  
Give him but learning, beauty, temper, sense,  
And he would then the happy state commence.  
The mother sigh'd, but she at last agreed,  
And now the son was likely to succeed ;  
Wealth is substantial good the fates allot,  
We know we have it, or we have it not ;  
But all those graces, which men highly rate,  
Their minds themselves imagine and create ;  
And therefore Finch was in a way to find  
A good that much depended on his mind.

' He look'd around, observing, till he saw  
Augusta Dallas ! when he felt an awe  
Of so much beauty and commanding grace,  
That well became the honours of her race :

' This lady never boasted of the trash  
That commerce brings : she never spoke of  
cash ;

The gentle blood that ran in every vein  
At all such notions blush'd in pure dis-  
dain.—

'Wealth once relinquish'd, there was all beside,

As Finch believed, that could adorn a bride ;  
He could not gaze upon the form and air,  
Without concluding all was right and fair ;  
Her mild but dignified reserve suppress  
All free inquiry—but his mind could rest,  
Assured that all was well, and in that view  
was blest.

'And now he asked, "am I the happy man  
Who can deserve her? is there one who  
can?"

His mother told him, he possess'd the land  
That puts a man in heart to ask a hand ;  
All who possess it feel they bear about  
A spell that puts a speedy end to doubt ;  
But Finch was modest—"May it then be  
thought

That she can so be gained?"—"She may be  
sought:"

"Can love with land be won?" "By land  
is beauty bought.

Do not, dear Charles, with indignation glow,  
All value that the want of which they know ;  
Nor do I blame her ; none that worth denies :  
But can my son be sure of what he buys ?  
Beauty she has, but with it can you find  
The inquiring spirit, or the studious mind ?  
This wilt thou need who art to thinking prone,  
And minds unpair'd had better think alone ;  
Then how unhappy will the husband be,  
Whose sole associate spoils his company ?"  
This he would try ; but all such trials prove  
Too mighty for a man disposed to love ;  
He whom the magic of a face enchains  
But little knowledge of the mind obtains ;  
If by his tender heart the man is led,  
He finds how erring is the soundest head.

'The lady saw his purpose ; she could  
meet

The man's inquiry, and his aim defeat ;  
She had a studied flattery in her look,  
She could be seen retiring with a book ;  
She by attending to his speech could prove,  
That she for learning had a fervent love ;  
Yet love alone she modestly declared,  
She must be spared inquiry, and was spared ;  
Of her poor studies she was not so weak,  
As in his presence, or at all, to speak ;  
But to discourse with him—who, all agreed,  
Has read so much, would be absurd indeed ;  
Ask what he might, she was so much a dunce  
She would confess her ignorance at once.

'All this the man believed not,—doom'd  
to grieve

For this belief, he this would not believe :

No ! he was quite in raptures to discern

That love, and that avidity to learn.

"Could she have found," she said, "a friend,  
a guide,

Like him, to study had been all her pride ;  
But, doom'd so long to frivolous employ,  
How could she those superior views enjoy ?  
The day might come—a happy day for her,  
When she might choose the ways she should  
prefer."

'Then too he learn'd, in accidental way,  
How much she grieved to lose the given day  
In dissipation wild, in visitation gay.

Happy, most happy, must the woman prove  
Who proudly looks on him she vows to love ;  
Who can her humble acquisitions state,  
That he will praise, at least will tolerate.

'Still the cool mother sundry doubts ex-  
press'd,—

"How ! is Augusta graver than the rest ?  
There are three others: they are not inclined  
To feed with precious food the empty mind :  
Whence this strong relish ?" "It is very  
strong,"

Replied the son, "and has possess'd her long,  
Increased indeed, I may presume, by views,—  
We may suppose—ah ! may she not refuse ?"  
"Fear not !—I see the question must be tried,  
Nay, is determined—let us to your bride."

'They soon were wedded, and the nymph  
appear'd

By all her promised excellence endear'd :  
Her words were kind, were cautious, and  
were few,

And she was proud—of what her husband knew.

'Weeks pass'd away, some five or six,  
before,

Bless'd in the present, Finch could think of  
more :

A month was next upon a journey spent,  
When to the Lakes the fond companions went ;  
Then the gay town received them, and, at  
last,

Home to their mansion, man and wife, they  
pass'd.

'And now in quiet way they came to live  
On what their fortune, love, and hopes would  
give :

The bonied moon had naught but silver rays,  
And shone benignly on their early days ;

The second moon a light less vivid shed,  
And now the silver rays were tinged with lead.  
They now began to look beyond the Hall,  
And think what friends would make a morning-call;

Their former appetites return'd, and now  
Both could their wishes and their tastes avow;  
'Twas now no longer "just what you approve,"  
But "let the wild fowl be to-day, my love."  
In fact the senses, drawn aside by force  
Of a strong passion, sought their usual course.

'Now to her music would the wife repair,  
To which he listen'd once with eager air;  
When there was so much harmony within,  
That any note was sure its way to win;  
But now the sweet melodious tones were sent  
From the struck chords, and none cared where they went.

Full well we know that many a favourite air,  
That charms a party, fails to charm a pair;  
And as Augusta play'd she look'd around,  
To see if one was dying at the sound:  
But all were gone—a husband, wrapt in gloom,  
Stalk'd careless, listless, up and down the room.

'And now 'tis time to fill that ductile mind  
With knowledge, from his stores of various kind:

His mother, in a peevish mood, had ask'd,  
"Does your Augusta profit? is she task'd?"  
"Madam!" he cried, offended with her looks,

"There's time for all things, and not all for books:

Just on one's marriage to sit down, and prate  
On points of learning, is a thing I hate."

"'Tis right, my son, and it appears to me,  
If deep your hatred, you must well agree."

'Finch was too angry for a man so wise,  
And said, "Insinuation I despise!  
Nor do I wish to have a mind so full  
Of learned trash—it makes a woman dull:  
Let it suffice, that I in her discern  
An aptitude, and a desire to learn."

'The matron smiled, but she observed  
a frown

On her son's brow, and calmly sat her down;  
Leaving the truth to Time, who solves our doubt,

By bringing his all-glorious daughter out—  
Truth! for whose beauty all their love profess,  
And yet how many think it ugliness!

"Augusta, love," said Finch, "while you engage

In that embroidery, let me read a page;  
Suppose it Hume's; indeed he takes a side,  
But still an author need not be our guide;  
And as he writes with elegance and ease,  
Do now attend—he will be sure to please.  
Here at the Revolution we commence,—  
We date, you know, our liberties from hence

"Yes, sure," Augusta answer'd with a smile,

"Our teacher always talk'd about his style,  
When we about the Revolution read,  
And how the martyrs to the flames were led;  
The good old bishops, I forget their names,  
But they were all committed to the flames;  
Maidens and widows, bachelors and wives,—  
The very babes and sucklings lost their lives.  
I read it all in Guthrie at the school,—  
What now!—I know you took me for a fool;  
There were five bishops taken from the stall,  
And twenty widows, I remember all;  
And by this token, that our teacher tried  
To cry for pity, till she howl'd and cried."

"True, true, my love, but you mistake the thing,—

The Revolution that made William king  
Is what I mean; the Reformation you,  
In Edward and Elizabeth."—"Tis true:  
But the nice reading is the love between  
The brave lord Essex and the cruel queen;  
And how he sent the ring to save his head,  
Which the false lady kept till he was dead.

"That is all true: now read, and I'll attend:

But was not she a most deceitful friend?  
It was a monstrous, vile, and treacherous thing,

To show no pity, and to keep the ring;  
But the queen shook her in her dying bed,  
And 'God forgive you!' was the word she said;

'Not I for certain:—Come, I will attend,  
So read the Revolutions to an end."

'Finch, with a timid, strange, inquiring look,

Softly and slowly laid aside the book  
With sigh inaudible—"Come, never heed,"  
Said he recovering, "now I cannot read."

'They walk'd at leisure through their wood  
and groves,  
In fields and lanes, and talk'd of plants and loves,

And loves of plants.—Said Finch, “Augusta, dear,  
You said you loved to learn,—were you sincere?

Do you remember that you told me once  
How much you grieved, and said you were  
a dunce?

That is, you wanted information. Say,  
What would you learn? I will direct your  
way.”

“Goodness!” said she, “what meanings  
you discern

In a few words! I said I wish’d to learn,  
And so I think I did; and you replied,  
The wish was good: what would you now  
beside?

Did not you say it show’d an ardent mind;  
And pray what more do you expect to find?”

“My dear Augusta, could you wish indeed  
For any knowledge, and not then proceed?  
That is not wishing——”

“Mercy! how you tease!  
You knew I said it with a view to please;  
A compliment to you, and quite enough,—  
You would not kill me with that puzzling stuff!  
Sure I might say I wish’d; but that is still  
Far from a promise: it is not,—‘I will.’

“But come, to show you that I will not hide  
My proper talents, you shall be my guide;  
And lady Boothby, when we meet, shall cry,  
She’s quite as good a botanist as I.”

“Right, my Augusta;” and, in manner  
grave,

Finch his first lecture on the science gave;  
An introduction,—and he said, “My dear,  
Your thought was happy,—let us persevere;  
And let no trifling cause our work retard,—”  
Agreed the lady, but she fear’d it hard.

‘Now o’er the grounds they rambled many  
a mile;

He show’d the flowers, the stamina, the style,  
Calix and corol, pericarp and fruit,  
And all the plant produces, branch and root;  
Of these he treated, every varying shape,  
Till poor Augusta panted to escape:  
He show’d the various foliage plants produce,  
Lunate and lyrate, runcinate, retuse;  
Long were the learned words, and urged with  
force,

Panduriform, pinnatifid, premorse,  
Latent, and patent, papulous, and plane,—  
“Oh!” said the pupil, “it will turn my  
brain.”

“Fear not,” he answer’d, and again, intent  
To fill that mind, o’er class and order went;  
And stopping, “Now,” said he, “my love  
attend.”

“I do,” said she, “but when will be an end?”  
“When we have made some progress,—now  
begin,

Which is the stigma, show me with the pin:  
Come, I have told you, dearest, let me see,  
Times very many,—tell it now to me.”

“Stigma! I know,—the things with  
yellow heads,

That shed the dust, and grow upon the  
threads;

You call them wives and husbands, but you  
know

That is a joke—here, look, and I will show  
All I remember.”—Doleful was the look

Of the preceptor, when he shut his book,  
(The system brought to aid them in their  
view,)

And now with sighs return’d—“It will not  
do.”

‘A handsome face first led him to suppose,  
There must be talent with such looks as those;  
The want of talent taught him now to find  
The face less handsome with so poor a mind;  
And half the beauty faded, when he found  
His cherish’d hopes were falling to the ground.

‘Finch lost his spirit; but e’en then he  
sought

For fancied powers: she might in time be  
taught.

Sure there was nothing in that mind to fear;  
The favourite study did not yet appear.—

‘Once he express’d a doubt if she could look  
For five succeeding minutes on a book;  
When, with awaken’d spirit, she replied,

“He was mistaken, and she would be tried.”  
‘With this delighted, he new hopes ex-  
press’d,—

“How do I know?—She may abide the test?  
Men I have known, and famous in their day,  
Who were by chance directed in their way:  
I have been hasty.—Well, Augusta, well,  
What is your favourite reading? prithee  
tell;

Our different tastes may different books  
require,—

Yours I may not peruse, and yet admire:  
Do then explain”—“Good Heaven!” said  
she, in haste,

“How do I hate these lectures upon taste!”



"I lecture not, my love; but do declare,—  
You read you say—what your attainments  
are."

"Oh! you believe," said she, "that other  
things

Are read as well as histories of kings,  
And loves of plants, with all that simple stuff  
About their sex, of which I know enough.  
Well, if I must, I will my studies name,  
Blame if you please—I know you love to blame.  
When all our childish books were set apart,  
The first I read was 'Wanderings of the  
Heart:'

It was a story, where was done a deed  
So dreadful, that alone I fear'd to read.

"The next was 'The Confessions of a  
Nun,—'

'Twas quite a shame such evil should be done;  
Nun of—no matter for the creature's name,  
For there are girls no nunnery can tame:  
Then was the story of the Haunted Hall,  
Where the huge picture nodded from the wall  
When the old lord look'd up with trembling  
dread,

And I grew pale, and shudder'd as I read:  
Then came the tales of Winters, Summers,  
Springs,  
At Bath and Brighton,—they were pretty  
things!

No ghosts nor spectres there were heard or seen,  
But all was love and flight to Gretna-green.

Perhaps your greater learning may despise  
What others like, and there your wisdom  
lies,—

Well! do not frown,—I read the tender tales  
Of lonely cots, retreats in silent vales  
For maids forsaken, and suspected wives,  
Against whose peace some foe his plot con-  
trives;

With all the hidden schemes that none can  
clear

Till the last book, and then the ghosts appear.

"I read all plays that on the boards suc-  
ceed,

And all the works, that ladies ever read,—  
Shakspeare, and all the rest,—I did, indeed,—  
Ay! you may stare; but, sir, believe it true  
That we can read and learn, as well as you.

"I would not boast,—but I could act  
a scene

In any play, before I was fifteen.

"Nor is this all: for many are the times  
I read in Pope and Milton, prose and rhymes;  
They were our lessons, and, at ten years old,  
I could repeat—but now enough is told.

Sir, I can tell you I my mind applied  
To all my studies, and was not denied  
Praise for my progress—Are you satisfied?"

"Entirely, madam! else were I possess'd  
By a strong spirit who could never rest.  
Yes! yes, no more I question,—here I close  
The theme for ever—let us to repose."

## BOOK X. THE OLD BACHELOR

A Friend arrives at the Hall—Old Bachelors  
and Maids—Relation of one—His Parents  
—The first Courtship—The second—The  
third—Long Interval—Travel—Decline of  
Life—The fourth Lady—Conclusion.

SAVE their kind friend the rector, Richard  
yet

Had not a favourite of his brother met;  
Now at the Hall that welcome guest appear'd,  
By trust, by trials, and by time endear'd;  
Of him the grateful 'squire his love profess'd,  
And full regard—he was of friends the best;  
'Yet not to him alone this good I owe,  
This social pleasure that our friends bestow;  
The sex, that wrought in earlier life my woes,  
With loss of time, who murder'd my repose,

They to my joys administer, nor vex  
Me more; and now I venerate the sex;  
And boast the friendship of a spinster kind,  
Cheerful and pleasant, to her fate resign'd;  
Then by her side my bachelor I place,  
And hold them honours to the human race.  
Yet these are they in tale and song display'd,  
The peevish man, and the repining maid;  
Creatures made up of misery and spite,  
Who taste no pleasures, except those they  
blight;  
From whom th' affrighten'd niece and nephew  
fly,—

Fear'd while they live, and useless till they die.

'Not such these friends of mine; they  
never meant

That youth should so be lost, or life be spent.

They had warm passions, tender hopes, desires  
That youth indulges, and that love inspires ;  
But fortune frown'd on their designs, displaced

The views of hope, and love's gay dreams  
disgraced ;

Took from the soul her sunny views, and  
spread

A cloud of dark but varying gloom instead :  
And shall we these with ridicule pursue,  
Because they did not what they could not do ?  
If they their lot prefer'd, still why the jest  
On those who took the way they judged the  
best ?

But if they sought a change, and sought in  
vain,

'Tis worse than brutal to deride their pain—  
But you will see them ; see the man I praise,  
The kind protector in my troubled days,  
Himself in trouble ; you shall see him now,  
And learn his worth ! and my applause allow.'

This friend appear'd, with talents form'd  
to please,

And with some looks of sprightliness and ease ;  
To him indeed the ills of life were known,  
But misery had not made him all her own.

They spoke on various themes, and George  
design'd

To show his brother this, the favourite mind ;  
To lead the friend, by subjects he could choose,  
To paint himself, his life, and earlier views,  
What he was bless'd to hope, what he was  
doom'd to lose.

They spoke of marriage, and he understood  
Their call on him, and said, ' It is not good  
To be alone, although alone to be  
Is freedom ; so are men in deserts free ;  
Men who unyoked and unattended groan,  
Condemn'd and grieved to walk their way  
alone :

Whatever ills a married pair betide,  
Each feels a stay, a comfort, or a guide ;  
" Not always comfort," will our wits reply.—  
Wits are not judges, nor the cause shall try.

' Have I not seen, when grief his visits paid,  
That they were easier by communion made ?  
True, with the quiet times and days serene,  
There have been flying clouds of care and  
spleen ;

But is not man, the solitary, sick  
Of his existence, sad and splenetic ?  
And who will help him, when such evils come,  
To bear the pressure or to clear the gloom ?

' Do you not find, that joy within the breast  
Of the unwedded man is soon suppress'd ;  
While, to the bosom of a wife convey'd,  
Increase is by participation made ?—  
The lighted lamp that gives another light,  
Say, is it by th' imparted blaze less bright ?  
Are not both gainers when the heart's distress  
Is so divided, that the pain is less ?  
And when the tear has stood in either eye,  
Love's sun shines out, and they are quickly  
dry.'

He ended here,—but would he not confess,  
How came these feelings on his mind to  
press ?

He would ! nor fear'd his weakness to display  
To men like them ; their weakness too had  
they.

Bright shone the fire, wine sparkled, sordid  
care

Was banish'd far, at least appear'd not there ;  
A kind and social spirit each possess'd,  
And thus began his tale the friendly guest.

' Near to my father's mansion,—but apart,  
I must acknowledge, from my father's heart—  
Dwelt a keen sportsman, in a pleasant seat ;  
Nor met the neighbours as should neighbours  
meet :

To them revenge appear'd a kind of right,  
A lawful pleasure, an avow'd delight ;  
Their neighbours too blew up their passions'  
fire,

And urged the anger of each rival-squire ;  
More still their waspish tempers to inflame,  
A party-spirit, friend of anger, came :  
Oft would my father cry, " that tory-knave,  
That villain-placeman, would the land en-  
slave."

Not that his neighbour had indeed a place,  
But would accept one—that was his disgrace ;  
Who, in his turn, was sure my father plann'd  
To revolutionize his native land.

He dared the most destructive things advance,  
And even pray'd for liberty to France ;  
Had still good hope that Heaven would grant  
his prayer,

That he might see a revolution there.  
At this the tory-squire was much perplex'd,  
" Freedom in France !—what will he utter  
next ?

Sooner should I in Paris look to see  
An English army sent their guard to be."

'My poor mamma, who had her mind subdued

By whig-control, and hated every feud,  
Would have her neighbour met with mind serene;

But fiercer spirit fired the tory-queen :  
My parents both had given her high disgust,  
Which she resenting said, Revenge is just ;  
And till th' offending parties chose to stoop,  
She judged it right to keep resentment up ;  
Could she in friendship with a woman live  
Who could the insult of a man forgive ?  
Did not her husband in a crowded room

Once call her idiot, and the thing was dumb ?  
The man's attack was brutal, to be sure,  
But she no less an idiot to endure.

'This lofty dame, with unrelenting soul,  
Had a fair girl to govern and control ;  
The dear Maria !—whom, when first I met,—  
Shame on this weakness ! do I feel it yet ?

'The parents' anger, you will oft-times see  
Prepares the children's minds for amity ;  
Youth will not enter into such debate,  
'Tis not in them to cherish groundless hate ;  
Nor can they feel men's quarrels or their cares,  
Of whig or tory, partridges or hares.

'Long ere we loved, this gentle girl and I  
Gave to our parents' discord many a sigh ;  
It was not ours,—and when the meeting came,  
It pleased us much to find our thoughts the same ;

But grief and trouble in our minds arose  
From the fierce spirits we could not compose ;  
And much it vex'd us that the friends so dear  
To us should foes among themselves appear.

'Such was this maid, the angel of her race,  
Whom I had loved in any time and place,  
But in a time and place which chance assign'd,  
When it was almost treason to be kind ;  
When we had vast impediments in view,  
Then wonder not that love in terror grew  
With double speed—we look'd, and strove to find

A kindred spirit in the hostile mind ;  
But is it hostile ! there appears no sign  
In those dear looks of warfare—none have mine :

At length I whisper'd—"Would that war  
might cease

Between our houses, and that all was peace !"

A sweet confusion on her features rose,  
"She could not bear to think of having  
foes,

When we might all as friends and neighbours  
live,

And for that blessing, O ! what would she  
give ?—"

"Then let us try and our endeavours blend,"  
I said, "to bring these quarrels to an end ;"  
Thus, with one purpose in our hearts, we  
strove,

And, if no more, increased our secret love ;  
Love that with such impediments in view  
To meet the growing danger stronger grew ;  
And from that time each heart, resolved and  
sure,

Grew firm in hope, and patient to endure.

'To those who know this season of delight  
I need not strive their feelings to excite ;  
To those who know not the delight or pain,  
The best description would be lent in vain ;  
And to the grieving, who will no more find  
The bower of bliss, to paint it were unkind ;  
I pass it by, to tell that long we tried

To bring our fathers over to our side ;  
'Twas bootless on their wives our skill to try,  
For one would not, and one in vain comply.

'First I began my father's heart to move,  
By boldly saying, "We are born to love ;"  
My father answer'd, with an air of ease,

"Well ! very well ! be loving if you please !  
Except a man insults us or offends,  
In my opinion we should all be friends."

'This gain'd me nothing ; little would  
accrue

From clearing points so useless though so  
true ;

But with some pains I brought him to confess,  
That to forgive our wrongs is to redress :

"It might be so," he answer'd, yet with  
doubt,

That it might not, "but what is this about ?"  
I dared not speak directly, but I strove  
To keep my subjects, harmony and love.

'Coolly my father look'd, and much enjoy'd  
The broken eloquence his eye destroy'd ;  
Yet less confused, and more resolved at last,  
With bolder effort to my point I past ;  
And fondly speaking of my peerless maid,  
I call'd her worth and beauty to my aid,  
"Then make her mine !" I said, and for his  
favour pray'd.

'My father's look was one I seldom saw,  
It gave no pleasure, nor created awe ;  
It was the kind of cool contemptuous smile  
Of witty persons, overcharged with bile ;

At first he spoke not, nor at last to me—

“Well now, and what if such a thing could be?

What, if the boy should his addresses pay  
To the tall girl, would that old tory say?  
I have no hatred to the dog,—but, still,  
It was some pleasure when I used him ill;  
This I must lose if we should brethren be,  
Yet may be not, for brethren disagree;  
The fool is right,—there is no bar in life  
Against their marriage,—let her be his wife.  
Well, sir, you hear me!”—Never man com-  
plied,

And left a beggar so dissatisfied;  
Though all was granted, yet was grace  
refused;

I felt as one indulged, and yet abused,  
And yet, although provoked, I was not un-  
amused.

‘In a reply like this appear’d to meet  
All that encourage hope, and that defeat;  
Consent, though cool, had been for me enough,  
But this consent had something of reproof;  
I had prepared my answer to his rage,  
With his contempt I thought not to engage:  
I, like a hero, would my castle storm,  
And meet the giant in his proper form;  
Then, conquering him, would set my princess  
free,

This would a trial and a triumph be:  
When lo! a sneering menial brings the keys,  
And cries in scorn, “Come, enter, if you  
please;

You’ll find the lady sitting on her bed,  
And ’tis expected that you woo and wed.”

‘Yet not so easy was my conquest found;  
I met with trouble ere with triumph crown’d.  
Triumph, alas!—My father little thought,  
A king at home, how other minds are wrought;  
True, his meek neighbour was a gentle squire,  
And had a soul averse from wrath and ire;  
He answer’d frankly, when to him I went,  
“I give you little, sir, in my consent:”  
He and my mother were to us inclined,  
The powerless party with the peaceful mind;  
But that meek man was destined to obey  
A sovereign lady’s unremitted sway;  
Who bore no partial, no divided rule,—  
All were obedient pupils in her school.  
She had religious zeal, both strong and sour,  
That gave an active sternness to her power;  
But few could please her, she herself was one  
By whom that deed was very seldom done;

With such a being, so disposed to feed  
Contempt and scorn—how was I to succeed?  
But love commanded, and I made my prayer  
To the stern lady, with an humble air;  
Said all that lovers hope, all measures tried  
That love suggested, and bow’d down to pride.

‘Yes! I have now the tygress in my eye—  
When I had ceased and waited her reply,  
A pause ensued, and then she slowly rose,  
With bitter smile predictive of my woes;  
A look she saw was plainly understood—

“Admire my daughter! Sir, you’re very  
good.

The girl is decent, take her all in all,—  
Genteel, we hope—perhaps a thought too tall;  
A daughter’s portion hers—you’ll think her  
fortune small.

Perhaps her uncles, in a cause so good,  
Would do a little for their flesh and blood;  
We are not ill allied,—and say we make  
Her portion decent—whither would you take?  
Is there some cottage on your father’s ground,  
Where may a dwelling for the girl be found?  
Or a small farm,—your mother understands  
How to make useful such a pair of hands.

“But this we drop at present, if you  
please,

We shall have leisure for such things as these;  
I would be proper ere you fix the day  
For the poor girl to honour and obey;  
At present therefore we may put an end  
To our discourse—Good morrow to you,  
friend!”

‘Then, with a solemn curtesy and profound,  
Her laughing eye she lifted from the ground,  
And left me lost in thought, and gazing idly  
round.

Still we had hope, and, growing bold in time,  
I would engage the father in our crime;  
But he refused, for though he wish’d us well,  
He said, “he must not make his house a  
hell;—”

And sure the meaning look that I convey’d  
Did not inform him that the hell was made.

‘Still hope existed that a mother’s heart  
Would in a daughter’s feeling take a part;  
Nor was it vain,—for there is found access  
To a hard heart, in time of its distress:

‘The mother sicken’d, and the daughter  
sigh’d,  
And we petition’d till our queen complied;  
She thought of dying, and if power must cease,  
Better to make, than cause, th’expected peace;

And sure this kindness, mixing with the blood,  
Its balmy influence caused the body's good ;  
For as a charm, it work'd upon the frame  
Of the reviving and relenting dame ;  
For when recover'd, she no more opposed  
Her daughter's wishes.—Here contention  
closed.

'Then bliss ensued, so exquisitely sweet,  
That with it once, once only, we can meet ;  
For though we love again, and though once  
more

We feel th' enlivening hope we felt before,  
Still the pure freshness of the joy that cast  
Its sweet around us is for ever past.  
O ! time to memory precious,—ever dear,  
Though ever painful—this eventful year ;  
What bliss is now in view ! and now what  
woes appear !

Sweet hours of expectation !—I was gone  
To the vile town to press our business on ;  
To urge its formal instruments,—and lo !  
Comes with dire looks a messenger of wo,  
With tidings sad as death !—With all my speed  
I reach'd her home !—but that pure soul was  
freed—

She was no more—for ever shut that eye,  
That look'd all soul, as if it could not die ;  
It could not see me—O ! the strange distress  
Of these new feelings !—misery's excess ;  
What can describe it ? words will not express.  
When I look back upon that dreadful scene,  
I feel renew'd the anguish that has been ;  
And reason trembles—Yes ! you bid me  
cease,

Nor try to think ; but I will think in peace.—  
Unbid and unforbidden, to the room  
I went, a gloomy wretch amid that gloom ;  
And there the lovely being on her bed  
Shrouded and cold was laid—Maria dead !  
There was I left,—and I have now no thought  
Remains with me, how fear or fancy wrought ;  
I know I gazed upon the marble cheek,  
And pray'd the dear departed girl to speak—  
Further I know not, for, till years were fled,  
All was extinguish'd—all with her was dead.  
I had a general terror, dread of all  
That could a thinking, feeling man befall ;  
I was desirous from myself to run,  
And something, but I knew not what, to shun :  
There was a blank from this I cannot fill,  
It is a puzzle and a terror still.  
Yet did I feel some intervals of bliss,  
Ev'n with the horrors of a fate like this ;

And dreams of wonderful construction paid  
For waking horror—dear angelic maid !

'When peace return'd, unfelt for many  
a year,

And hope, discarded flatterer, dared t' appear ;  
I heard of my estate, how free from debt,  
And of the comforts life afforded yet ;  
Beside that best of comforts in a life  
So sad as mine—a fond and faithful wife.  
My gentle mother, now a widow, made  
These strong attempts to guide me or per-  
suade.

' "Much time is lost," she said, "but yet  
my son

May, in the race of life, have much to run ;  
When I am gone, thy life to thee will seem  
Lonely and sad, a melancholy dream ;  
Get thee a wife—I will not say to love,  
But one, a friend in thy distress to prove ;  
One who will kindly help thee to sustain  
Thy spirit's burden in its hours of pain ;  
Say, will you marry ?"—I in haste replied,  
"And who would be the self-devoted bride ?  
There is a melancholy power that reigns  
Tyrant within me—who would bear his chains,  
And hear them clicking every wretched hour,  
With will to aid me, but without the power ?  
But if such one were found with easy mind,  
Who would not ask for raptures—I'm  
resign'd."

' "'Tis quite enough," my gentle mother  
cried,

"We leave the raptures, and will find the  
bride."

'There was a lady near us, quite discreet,  
Whom in our visits 'twas our chance to meet,  
One grave and civil, who had no desire  
That men should praise her beauties or ad-  
mire ;

She in our walks would sometimes take my  
arm,

But had no foolish fluttering or alarm ;  
She wish'd no heart to wound, no truth to  
prove,

And seem'd, like me, as one estranged from  
love ;

My mother praised her, and with so much skill,  
She gave a certain bias to my will ;  
But calm indeed our courtship ; I profess'd  
A due regard—My mother did the rest ;  
Who soon declared that we should love, and  
grow

As fond a couple as the world could show ;

And talk'd of boys and girls with so much  
glee,

That I began to wish the thing could be.

'Still when the day that soon would come  
was named,

I felt a cold fit, and was half ashamed;

But we too far proceeded to revoke,

And had been much too serious for a joke:

I shook away the fear that man annoys,

And thought a little of the girls and boys.

'A week remain'd,—for seven succeeding  
days

Nor man nor woman might control my ways;

For seven dear nights I might to rest retire

At my own time, and none the cause require;

For seven blest days I might go in and out,

And none demand, "Sir, what are you  
about?"

For one whole week I might at will discourse  
On any subject, with a freeman's force.

'Thus while I thought, I utter'd, as men sing

In under-voice, reciting "With this ring,"

That when the hour should come, I might  
not dread

These, or the words that follow'd, "I thee  
wed."

'Such was my state of mind, exulting now  
And then depress'd—I cannot tell you how—  
When a poor lady, whom her friends could  
send

On any message, a convenient friend,  
Who had all feelings of her own overcome,  
And could pronounce to any man his doom;  
Whose heart indeed was marble, but whose  
face

Assumed the look adapted to the case;  
Enter'd my room, commission'd to assuage  
What was foreseen, my sorrow and my rage.

'It seem'd the lady whom I could prefer,  
And could my much-loved freedom lose for  
her,

Had bold attempts, but not successful, made,  
The heart of some rich cousin to invade;  
Who, half resisting, half complying, kept  
A cautious distance, and the business slept.

'This prudent swain his own importance  
knew,

And swore to part the now affianced two:  
Fill'd with insidious purpose, forth he went,  
Profess'd his love, and woo'd her to consent:  
"Ah! were it true!" she sigh'd; he boldly  
swore

His love sincere, and mine was sought no more.

'All this the witch at dreadful length  
reveal'd,

And begg'd me calmly to my fate to yield:  
Much pains she took engagements old to state,  
And hoped to hear me curse my cruel fate,  
Threat'ning my luckless life; and thought it  
strange

In me to bear the unexpected change:

In my calm feelings she beheld disguise,

And told of some strange wildness in my eyes.

'But there was nothing in the eye amiss,

And the heart calmly bore a stroke like this;

Not so my mother; though of gentle kind,

She could no mercy for the creature find.

"Vile plot!" she said.—"But, madam, if  
they plot,

And you would have revenge, disturb them  
not."

"What can we do, my son?"—"Consult  
our ease,

And do just nothing, madam, if you please."

"What will be said?"—"We need not  
that discuss;

Our friends and neighbours will do that  
for us."

"Do you so lightly, son, your loss sus-  
tain?"—"

"Nay, my dear madam, but I count it gain."

"The world will blame us sure, if we be  
still."

"And, if you stir, you may be sure it will."

"Not to such loss your father had  
agreed."

"No, for my father's had been loss indeed."  
'With gracious smile my mother gave  
consent,

And let th' affair slip by with much content.

'Some old dispute, the lover meant should  
rise,

Some point of strife they could not com-  
promise,

Displeased the squire—he from the field with-  
drew,

Not quite conceal'd, not fully placed in view;

But half advancing, half retreating, kept

At his old distance, and the business slept.

'Six years had past, and forty ere the six,

When Time began to play his usual tricks:

The locks once comely in a virgin's sight,

Locks of pure brown, display'd th' encroach-  
ing white;

And blood once fervid now to cool began,

And Time's strong pressure to subdue the man:

I rode or walk'd as I was wont before,  
But now the bounding spirit was no more;  
A moderate pace would now my body heat,  
A walk of moderate length distress my feet.  
I show'd my stranger-guest those hills sublime,  
But said, "the view is poor, we need not  
climb."

At a friend's mansion I began to dread  
The cold neat parlour, and the gay glazed bed;  
At home I felt a more decided taste,  
And must have all things in my order placed;  
I ceased to hunt, my horses pleased me less,  
My dinner more; I learn'd to play at chess;  
I took my dog and gun, but saw the brute  
Was disappointed that I did not shoot;  
My morning walks I now could bear to lose,  
And bless'd the shower that gave me not to  
choose:

In fact, I felt a languor stealing on;  
The active arm, the agile hand were gone;  
Small daily actions into habits grew,  
And new dislike to forms and fashion new:  
I loved my trees in order to dispose,  
I number'd peaches, look'd how stocks arose,  
Told the same story oft—in short, began to  
prose.

'My books were changed; I now prefer'd  
the truth

To the light reading of unsettled youth;  
Novels grew tedious, but by choice or chance,  
I still had interest in the wild romance:  
There is an age, we know, when tales of love  
Form the sweet pabulum our hearts approve;  
Then as we read we feel, and are indeed,  
We judge, th' heroic men of whom we read;  
But in our after life these fancies fail,  
We cannot be the heroes of the tale;  
The parts that Cliffords, Mordaunts, Bevilles  
play

We cannot,—cannot be so smart and gay.

'But all the mighty deeds and matchless  
powers

Of errant knights we never fancied ours,  
And thus the prowess of each gifted knight  
Must at all times create the same delight;  
Lovelace a forward youth might hope to  
seem,

But Lancelot never,—that he could not  
dream;

Nothing reminds us in the magic page  
Of old romance, of our declining age:  
If once our fancy mighty dragons slew,  
This is no more than fancy now can do;

But when the heroes of a novel come,  
Conquer'd and conquering, to a drawing-  
room,

We no more feel the vanity that sees  
Within ourselves what we admire in these,  
And so we leave the modern tale, to fly  
From realm to realm with Tristram or Sir  
Guy.

'Not quite a Quixote, I could not suppose  
That queens would call me to subdue their  
foes;

But, by a voluntary weakness sway'd,  
When fancy call'd, I willingly obey'd.

'Such I became, and I believed my heart  
Might yet be pierced by some peculiar dart  
Of right heroic kind, and I could prove  
Fond of some peerless nymph who deign'd  
to love,

Some high-soul'd virgin, who had spent her  
time

In studies grave, heroic and sublime;  
Who would not like me less that I had spent  
Years eight and forty, just the age of Kent;  
But not with Kent's discretion, for I grew  
Fond of a creature whom my fancy drew;  
A kind of beings who are never found  
On middle-earth, but grow on fairy-ground.

'These found I not; but I had luck to find  
A mortal woman of this fairy kind;  
A thin, tall, upright, serious, slender maid,  
Who in my own romantic regions stray'd;  
From the world's glare to this sweet vale  
retired,

To dwell unseen, unsullied, unadmired;  
In all her virgin excellence, above  
The gaze of crowds, and hopes of vulgar love.

'We spoke of noble deeds in happier times,  
Of glorious virtues, of debasing crimes:  
Warm was the season, and the subject too,  
And therefore warm in our discourse we grew.  
Love made such haste, that ere a month was  
flown

Since first we met, he had us for his own:  
Riches are trifles in an hero's sight,  
And lead to questions low and unpolite;  
I nothing said of money or of land,  
But bent my knee, and fondly ask'd her hand;  
And the dear lady, with a grace divine,  
Gave it, and frankly answer'd, "it is thine."

'Our reading was not to romance confined,  
But still it gave its colour to the mind;  
Gave to our studies something of its force,  
And made profound and tender our discourse;

Our subjects all, and our religion, took  
The grave and solemn spirit of our book :  
And who had seen us walk, or heard us read,  
Would say, "these lovers are sublime indeed."

'I knew not why, but when the day was  
named

My ardent wishes felt a little tamed ;  
My mother's sickness then awaked my grief,  
And yet, to own the truth, was some relief ;  
It left uncertain that decisive time  
That made my feelings nervous and sublime.

'Still all was kindness, and at morn and eve  
I made a visit, talk'd, and took my leave :  
Kind were the lady's looks, her eyes were  
bright,

And swam, I thought, in exquisite delight ;  
A lovely red suffused the virgin cheek,  
And spoke more plainly than the tongue  
could speak ;

Plainly all seem'd to promise love and joy,  
Nor fear'd we ought that might our bliss  
destroy.

'Engaged by business, I one morn delay'd  
My usual call on the accomplish'd maid ;  
But soon, that small impediment removed,  
I paid the visit that decisive proved ;  
For the fair lady had, with grieving heart,  
So I believed, retired to sigh apart :  
I saw her friend, and begg'd her to entreat  
My gentle nymph her sighing swain to meet.

'The gossip gone—What daemon, in his spite  
To love and man, could my frail mind excite,  
And lead me curious on, against all sense of  
right ?

There met my eye, unclosed, a closet's door—  
Shame ! how could I the secrets there ex-  
plore ?

Pride, honour, friendship, love condemn'd the  
deed,

And yet, in spite of all, I could proceed !  
I went, I saw—Shall I describe the hoard  
Of precious worth in seal'd deposits stored  
Of sparkling hues ? Enough—enough is told,  
'Tis not for man such mysteries to unfold.  
Thus far I dare—Whene'er those orbits swam  
In that blue liquid that restrain'd their flame,  
As showers the sunbeams—when the crimson  
glow

Of the red rose o'erspread those cheeks of  
snow,

I saw, but not the cause—'twas not the red  
Of transient blush that o'er her face was  
spread ;

'Twas not the lighter red, that partly streaks  
The Catherine pear, that brighten'd o'er her  
cheeks,

Nor scarlet blush of shame—but such disclose  
The velvet petals of the Austrian rose  
When first unfolded, warm the glowing hue,  
Nor cold as rouge, but deep'ning on the view :  
Such were those cheeks—the causes unex-  
plored

Were now detected in that secret hoard ;  
And ever to that rich recess would turn  
My mind, and cause for such effect discern.  
Such was my fortune, O ! my friends, and such  
The end of lofty hopes that grasp'd too much.  
This was, indeed, a trying time in life,  
I lost at once a mother and a wife ;  
Yet compensation came in time for these,  
And what I lost in joy, I gain'd in ease.'—

'But,' said the squire, 'did thus your  
courtship cease ?

Resign'd your mistress her betroth'd in  
peace ?'—

'Yes ; and had sense her feelings to restrain,  
Nor ask'd me once my conduct to explain ;  
But me she saw those swimming eyes explore,  
And explanation she required no more :  
Friend to the last, I left her with regret—  
Nay, leave her not, for we are neighbours yet.

'These views extinct, I travell'd, not with  
taste,

But so that time ran wickedly to waste ;  
I penn'd some notes, and might a book have  
made,

But I had no connexion with the trade ;  
Bridges and churches, towers and halls, I saw,  
Maidens and madonnas, and could sketch and  
draw :

Yes, I had made a book, but that my pride  
In the not making was more gratified.

'There was one feeling upon foreign ground,  
That more distressing than the rest was found ;  
That though with joy I should my country see,  
There none had pleasure in expecting me.

'I now was sixty, but could walk and eat ;  
My food was pleasant, and my slumbers  
sweet ;

But what could urge me at a day so late  
To think of women ?—my unlucky fate.

'It was not sudden ; I had no alarms,  
But was attack'd when resting on my arms ;  
Like the poor soldier ; when the battle rag'd  
The man escaped, though twice or thrice  
engaged,



But when it ended, in a quiet spot  
He fell, the victim of a random-shot.

'With my good friend the vicar oft I spent  
The evening hours in quiet, as I meant;  
He was a friend in whom, although untried  
By ought severe, I found I could confide;  
A pleasant, sturdy disputant was he,  
Who had a daughter—such the Fates decree,  
To prove how weak is man—poor yielding  
man, like me.

'Time after time the maid went out and in,  
Ere love was yet beginning to begin;  
The first awakening proof, the early doubt,  
Rose from observing she went in and out.  
My friend, though careless, seem'd my mind  
to explore,

"Why do you look so often at the door?"  
I then was cautious, but it did no good,  
For she, at least, my meanings understood;  
But to the vicar nothing she convey'd  
Of what she thought—she did not feel afraid.

'I must confess, this creature in her mind  
Nor face had beauty that a man would blind;  
No poet of her matchless charms would write,  
Yet sober praise they fairly would excite:  
She was a creature form'd man's heart to make  
Serenely happy, not to pierce and shake;  
If she were tried for breaking human hearts  
Men would acquit her—she had not the arts;  
Yet without art, at first without design,  
She soon became the arbitress of mine;  
Without pretensions—nay, without pretence,  
But by a native strange intelligence  
Women possess when they behold a man  
Whom they can tease, and are assured they  
can;

Then 'tis their soul's delight and pride to reign  
O'er the fond slave, to give him ease or pain,  
And stretch and loose by turns the weighty  
viewless chain.

'Though much she knew, yet nothing could  
she prove;  
I had not yet confess'd the crime of love;  
But in an hour when guardian-angels sleep,  
I fail'd the secret of my soul to keep;  
And then I saw the triumph in those eyes  
That spoke—"Ay, now you are indeed my  
prize."

I almost thought I saw compassion, too,  
For all the cruel things she meant to do.  
Well I can call to mind the managed air  
That gave no comfort, that brought no de-  
spair,

That in a dubious balance held the mind,  
To each side turning, never much inclined.

'She spoke with kindness—thought the  
honour high,  
And knew not how to give a fit reply;  
She could not, would not, dared not, must  
not deem

Such language proof of ought but my esteem;  
It made her proud—she never could forget  
My partial thoughts,—she felt her much in  
debt:

She who had never in her life indulged  
The thought of hearing what I now divulged,  
I who had seen so many and so much,—  
It was an honour—she would deem it such:  
Our different years, indeed, would put an end  
To other views, but still her father's friend  
To her, she humbly hoped, would his regard  
extend.

Thus saying nothing, all she meant to say,  
She play'd the part the sex delights to play;  
Now by some act of kindness giving scope  
To the new workings of excited hope,  
Then by an air of something like disdain,  
But scarcely seen, repelling it again;  
Then for a season, neither cold nor kind,  
She kept a sort of balance in the mind,  
And as his pole a dancer on the rope,  
The equal poise on both sides kept me up.

'Is it not strange that man can fairly view  
Pursuit like this, and yet his point pursue?  
While he the folly fairly will confess,  
And even feel the danger of success?  
But so it is, and nought the Circes care  
How ill their victims with their poison fare,  
When thus they trifle, and with quiet soul  
Mix their ingredients in the maddening bowl.  
Their high regard, the softness of their air,  
The pitying grief that saddens at a prayer,  
Their grave petitions for the peace of mind  
That they determine you shall never find,  
And all their vain amazement that a man  
Like you should love—they wonder how you  
can.

For months the idler play'd her wicked part,  
Then fairly gave the secret of her heart.

"She hoped"—I now the smiling gipsy  
view—

"Her father's friend would be her lover's too,  
Young Henry Gale"—But why delay so  
long?—

She could not tell—she fear'd it might be  
wrong,

"But I was good"—I knew not, I was weak,  
And spoke as love directed me to speak.

'When in my arms their boy and girl I take,  
I feel a fondness for the mother's sake;  
But though the dears some softening thoughts  
excite,

I have no wishes for the father's right.

'Now all is quiet, and the mind sustains  
Its proper comforts, its befitting pains;  
The heart reposes; it has had its share  
Of love, as much as it could fairly bear,  
And what is left in life, that now demands  
its care?

'For O! my friends, if this were all indeed,  
Could we believe that nothing would succeed;  
If all were but this daily dose of life,  
Without a care or comfort, child or wife;  
These walks for health with nothing more in  
view,

This doing nothing, and with labour too;  
This frequent asking when 'tis time to dine,  
This daily dosing o'er the news and wine;

This age's riddle, when each day appears  
So very long, so very short the years;  
If this were all—but let me not suppose—  
What then were life! whose virtues, trials,  
woes,

Would sleep th' eternal sleep, and there the  
scene would close.

'This cannot be—but why has Time a  
pace

That seems unequal in our mortal race?  
Quick is that pace in early life, but slow,  
Tedious and heavy, as we older grow;  
But yet, though slow, the movements are  
alike,

And with no force upon the memory strike,  
And therefore tedious as we find them all,  
They leave us nothing we in view recall;  
But days that we so dull and heavy knew  
Are now as moments passing in review,  
And hence arises ancient men's report,  
That days are tedious, and yet years are  
short.'

## BOOK XI. THE MAID'S STORY

A Mother's advice—Trials for a young Lady—  
Ancient Lovers—The Mother a Wife—  
Grandmamma—Gentle Economy—Frederick,  
a young Collegian—Grandmamma  
dies—Retreat with Biddy—Comforts of  
the Poor—Return Home—Death of the  
Husband—Nervous Disorders—Conversion  
—Frederick a Teacher—Retreat to Sid-  
mouth—Self-examination—The Mother  
dies—Frederick a soldier—Retirement with  
a Friend—Their Happiness how interrupted  
—Frederick an Actor—Is dismissed and  
supported—A last Adventure.

THREE days remain'd their friend, and  
then again

The Brothers left, themselves to entertain;  
When spake the younger—'It would please  
me well

To hear thy spinster-friend her story tell;  
And our attention would be nobly paid  
Thus to compare the Bachelor and Maid.'

'Frank as she is,' replied the squire, 'nor  
one

Is more disposed to show what she has done  
With time, or time with her; yet all her care  
And every trial she might not declare

To one a stranger; but to me, her friend,  
She has the story of those trials penned;  
These shalt thou hear, for well the maid I  
know,

And will her efforts and her conquests show.  
Jacques is abroad, and we alone shall dine,  
And then to give this lady's tale be mine;  
Thou wilt attend to this good spinster's life,  
And grieve and wonder she is not a wife;  
But if we judge by either words or looks,  
Her mode of life, her morals, or her books,  
Her pure devotion, unaffected sense,  
Her placid air, her mild benevolence,  
Her gay good humour, and her manners free,  
She is as happy as a maid can be;  
If as a wife, I know not, and decline  
Question like this, till I can judge of thine.'

Then from a secret hoard drew forth the  
squire

His tale, and said, 'Attention I require—  
My verse you may condemn, my theme you  
must admire.'

'I to your kindness speak, let that prevail,  
And of my frailty judge as beings frail.—

'My father dying, to my mother left  
An infant charge, of all things else bereft ;  
Poor, but experienced in the world, she knew  
What others did, and judged what she could  
do ;

Beauty she justly weigh'd, was never blind  
To her own interest, and she read mankind :  
She view'd my person with approving glance,  
And judged the way my fortune to advance ;  
Taught me betimes that person to improve,  
And make a lawful merchandize of love ;  
Bade me my temper in subjection keep,  
And not permit my vigilance to sleep ;  
I was not one, a miss, who might presume  
Now to be crazed by mirth, now sunk in  
gloom ;

Nor to be fretful, vapourish, or give way  
To spleen and anger, as the wealthy may ;  
But I must please, and all I felt of pride,  
Contempt, and hatred, I must cast aside.

"Have not one friend," my mother cried,  
"not one ;

That bane of our romantic triflers shun ;  
Suppose her true, can she afford you aid ?  
Suppose her false, your purpose is betray'd ;  
And then in dubious points, and matters nice,  
How can you profit by a child's advice ?  
While you are writing on from post to post,  
Your hour is over, and a man is lost ;  
Girls of their hearts are scribbling ; their  
desires,

And what the folly of the heart requires,  
Duples to their dreams—but I the truth im-  
part,

You cannot, child, afford to have a heart ;  
Think nothing of it ; to yourself be true,  
And keep life's first great business in your  
view ;—

Take it, dear Martha, for a useful rule,  
She who is poor is ugly or a fool ;  
Or, worse than either, has a bosom fill'd  
With soft emotions, and with raptures thrill'd.

"Read not too much, nor write in verse or  
prose,

For then you make the dull and foolish foes ;  
Yet those who do, deride not nor condemn,  
It is not safe to raise up foes in them ;  
For though they harm you not, as block-  
heads do,

There is some malice in the scribbling crew."

'Such her advice ; full hard with her had  
dealt

The world, and she the usage keenly felt.

"Keep your good name," she said, "and  
that to keep

You must not suffer vigilance to sleep :  
Some have, perhaps, the name of chaste  
retain'd,

When nought of chastity itself remain'd ;  
But there is danger—few have means to blind  
The keen-eyed world, and none to make it  
kind.

"And one thing more—to free yourself  
from foes

Never a secret to your friend disclose ;  
Secrets with girls, like loaded guns with boys,  
Are never valued till they make a noise ;  
To show how trusted, they their power dis-  
play ;

To show how worthy, they the trust betray ;  
Like pence in children's pockets secrets lie  
In female bosoms—they must burn or fly.

"Let not your heart be soften'd ; if it  
be,

Let not the man his softening influence see ;  
For the most fond will sometimes tyrants  
prove,  
And wound the bosom where they trace the  
love.

But to your fortune look, on that depend  
For your life's comfort, comforts that attend  
On wealth alone—wealth gone, they have  
their end."

'Such were my mother's cares to mend my  
lot,

And such her pupil they succeeded not.

'It was conceived the person I had then  
Might lead to serious thoughts some wealthy  
men,

Who having none their purpose to oppose  
Would soon be won their wishes to disclose :  
My mother thought I was the very child  
By whom the old and amorous are beguiled ;  
So mildly gay, so ignorantly fair,  
And pure, no doubt, as sleeping infants are :  
Then I had lessons how to look and move,  
And, I repeat, make merchandize of love.

'Thrice it was tried if one so young could  
bring

Old wary men to buy the binding ring ;  
And on the taper finger, to whose tip  
The fond old swain would press his withering  
lip,

Place the strong charm :—and one would win  
my heart

By re-assuming youth—a trying part ;

Girls, he supposed, all knew the young were bold,

And he would show that spirit in the old ;  
In boys they loved to hear the rattling tongue,  
And he would talk as idly as the young ;  
He knew the vices our Lotharios boast,  
And he would show of every vice the ghost,  
The evil's self, without disguise or dress,  
Vice in its own pure native ugliness ;  
Not as the drunkenness of slaves to prove  
Vice hateful, but that seeing, I might love.  
He drove me out, and I was pleased to see  
Care of himself, it served as care for me ;  
For he would tell me, that he should not spare  
Man, horse, or carriage, if I were not there :  
Provoked at last, my malice I obey'd,  
And smiling said, " Sir, I am not afraid."

" This check'd his spirit ; but he said, " Could you  
Have charge so rich, you would be careful too."

" And he, indeed, so very slowly drove,  
That we dismiss'd the over-cautious love.

" My next admirer was of equal age,  
And wish'd the child's affection to engage,  
And keep the fluttering bird a victim in his cage :

He had no portion of his rival's glee,  
But gravely praised the gravity in me ;  
Religious, moral, both in word and deed,  
But warmly disputatious in his creed :  
Wild in his younger time, as we were told,  
And therefore like a penitent when old.  
Strange ! he should wish a lively girl to look  
Upon the methods his repentance took.

" Then he would say, he was no more a rake  
To squander money for his passions' sake ;  
Yet, upon proper terms, as man discreet,  
He with my mother was disposed to treat,  
To whom he told, " the price of beauty fell  
In every market, and but few could sell ;  
That trade in India, once alive and brisk,  
Was over done, and scarcely worth the risk."'  
Then stoop'd to speak of board, and what  
for life

A wife would cost—if he should take a wife.

" Hardly he bargain'd, and so much desired,  
That we demurr'd ; and he, displeased,  
retired.

" And now I hoped to rest, nor act again  
The paltry part for which I felt disdain,  
When a third lover came within our view,  
And somewhat differing from the former two ;

He had been much abroad, and he had seen  
The world's weak side, and read the hearts  
of men ;

But all, it seem'd, this study could produce,  
Was food for spleen, derision, and abuse ;  
He level'd all, as one who had intent  
To clear the vile and spot the innocent ;  
He praised my sense, and said I ought to be  
From girl's restraint and nursery maxims free ;  
He praised my mother ; but he judged her  
wrong

To keep us from th' admiring world so long ;  
He praised himself ; and then his vices named,  
And call'd them follies, and was not ashamed.  
He more than hinted that the lessons taught  
By priests were all with superstition fraught ;  
And I must think them for the crowd de-  
sign'd,

Not to alarm the free and liberal mind.

" Wisdom with him was virtue. They were  
wrong

And weak, he said, who went not with the  
throng ;

Man must his passions order and restrain  
In all that gives his fellow-subjects pain ;  
But yet of guilt he would in pity speak,  
And as he judged, the wicked were the weak.

" Such was the lover of a simple maid,  
Who seem'd to call his logic to his aid,  
And to mean something : I will not pretend  
To judge the purpose of my reasoning friend,  
Who was dismiss'd, in quiet to complain  
That so much labour was bestow'd in vain.

" And now my mother seem'd disposed to try  
A life of reason and tranquillity ;

Ere this, her health and spirits were the  
best,

Hers the day's trifling, and the nightly rest ;  
But something new was in her mind instill'd ;  
Unquiet thoughts the matron bosom fill'd ;  
For five and forty peaceful years she bore  
Her placid looks, and dress becoming wore :  
She could a compliment with pleasure take,  
But no absurd impression could it make.

Now were her nerves disorder'd ; she was  
weak,

And must the help of a physician seek ;  
A Scotch physician, who had just began  
To settle near us, quite a graceful man,  
And very clever, with a soft address,  
That would his meaning tenderly express.

" Sick as my mother seem'd, when he inquired  
If she was ill, he found her well attired ;

She purchased wares so showy and so fine,  
The venders all believed th' indulgence  
mine :—

But I, who thrice was woo'd, had lovers three,  
Must now again a very infant be ;  
While the good lady, twenty years a wife,  
Was to decide the colour of his life :  
And she decided. She was wont t' appear  
To these unequal marriages severe ;  
Her thoughts of such with energy she told,  
And was repulsive, dignified, and cold ;  
But now, like monarchs weary of a throne,  
She would no longer reign—at least alone.

'She gave her pulse, and, with a manner  
sweet,  
Wish'd him to feel how kindly they could  
beat ;

And 'tis a thing quite wonderful to tell  
How soon he understood them, and how well.

'Now, when she married, I from home was  
sent,

With grandmamma to keep perpetual Lent ;  
For she would take me on conditions cheap,  
For what we scarcely could a parrot keep :  
A trifle added to the daily fare  
Would feed a maiden who must learn to spare.

'With grandmamma I lived in perfect ease.  
Consent to starve, and I was sure to please ;  
Full well I knew the painful shifts we made,  
Expenses all to lessen or evade,  
And tradesmen's flinty hearts to soften and  
persuade.

'Poor grandmamma among the gentry dwelt  
Of a small town, and all the honour felt ;  
Shrinking from all approaches to disgrace  
That might be mark'd in so genteel a place ;  
Where every daily deed, as soon as done,  
Ran through the town as fast as it could  
run :—

At dinners what appear'd—at cards who lost  
or won.

'Our good appearance through the town was  
known,  
Hunger and thirst were matters of our own ;  
And you would judge that she in scandal  
dealt

Who told on what we fed, or how we felt.

'We had a little maid, some four feet high,  
Who was employ'd our household stores to  
buy ;

For she would weary every man in trade,  
And tease t' assent whom she could not per-  
suade.

'Methinks I see her, with her pigmy light,  
Precede her mistress in a moonless night ;  
From the small lantern throwing through the  
street

The dimm'd effulgence at her lady's feet ;  
What time she went to prove her well-known  
skill

With rival friends at their beloved quadrille.

"And how's your pain?" inquired the  
gentle maid,

For that was asking if with luck she play'd ;  
And this she answer'd as the cards decreed,  
"O Biddy! ask not—very bad indeed ;"

Or, in more cheerful tone, from spirit light,  
"Why, thank you, Biddy, pretty well to-  
night."

'The good old lady often thought me vain,  
And of my dress would tenderly complain ;  
But liked my taste in food of every kind,  
As from all grossness, like her own, refined :  
Yet when she hinted that on herbs and bread  
Girls of my age and spirit should be fed,  
Whate'er my age had borne, my flesh and  
blood,

Spirit and strength, the interdict withstood ;  
But though I might the frugal soul offend  
Of the good matron, now my only friend,  
And though her purse suggested rules so  
strict,

Her love could not the punishment inflict :  
She sometimes watch'd the morsel with a  
frown,

And sigh'd to see, but let it still go down.

'Our butcher's bill, to me a monstrous sum,  
Was such, that summon'd, he forebore to  
come :

Proud man was he, and when the bill was paid,  
He put the money in his bag and play'd,  
Jerking it up, and catching it again,  
And poisoning in his hand in pure disdain ;  
While the good lady, awed by man so proud,  
And yet disposed to have her claims allow'd,  
Balanced between humility and pride,  
Stood a fall'n empress at the butcher's side,  
Praising his meat as delicate and nice—

"Yes, madam, yes! if people pay the price."

'So lived the lady, and so murmur'd I,

In all the grief of pride and poverty :  
Twice in the year there came a note to tell  
How well mamma, who hoped the child was  
well ;

It was not then a pleasure to be styled,  
By a mamma of such experience, Child !

But I suppress'd the feelings of my pride,  
Or other feelings set them all aside.

'There was a youth from college, just the one  
I judged mamma would value as a son;  
He was to me good, handsome, learn'd, genteel—

I cannot now what then I thought reveal;  
But, in a word, he was the very youth  
Who told me what I judged the very truth,  
That love like his and charms like mine agreed,  
For all description they must both exceed:  
Yet scarcely can I throw a smile on things  
So painful, but that Time his comfort brings,  
Or rather throws oblivion on the mind,  
For we are more forgetful than resign'd.

'We both were young, had heard of love  
and read,

And could see nothing in the thing to dread,  
But like a simple pair our time employ'd  
In pleasant views to be in time enjoy'd;  
When Frederick came, the kind old lady  
smiled

To see the youth so taken with her child;  
A nice young man, who came with unsoil'd  
feet

In her best room, and neither drank nor eat:  
Alas! he planted in a vacant breast  
The hope and fears that robb'd it of its rest.

'All now appear'd so right, so fair, so just,  
We surely might the lovely prospect trust;  
Alas! poor Frederick and his charmer found  
That they were standing on fallacious ground:  
All that the father of the youth could do  
Was done—and now he must himself pursue  
Success in life; and, honest truth to state,  
He was not fitted for a candidate:

I, too, had nothing in this world below,  
Save what a Scotch physician could bestow,  
Who for a pittance took my mother's hand,  
And if disposed, what had they to command?

'But these were after fears, nor came  
t' annoy

The tender children in their dreams of joy;  
Who talk'd of glebe and garden, tithe and rent,  
And how a fancied income should be spent;  
What friends, what social parties we should  
see,

And live with what genteel economy;  
In fact, we gave our hearts as children give,  
And thought of living as our neighbours live.

'Now when assured ourselves that all was  
well,

'Twas right our friends of these designs to tell;

For this we parted.—Grandmamma, amazed,  
Upon her child with fond compassion gazed;  
Then pious tears appear'd, but not a word  
In aid of weeping till she cried, "Good Lord!"  
She then, with hurried motion, sought the  
stairs,

And calling Biddy, bade her come to prayers.

'Yet the good lady early in her life  
Was call'd to vow the duties of a wife;  
She sought the altar by her friends' advice,  
No free-will offering, but a sacrifice:  
But here a forward girl and eager boy  
Dared talk of life, and turn their heads with  
joy.

'To my mamma I wrote in just the way  
I felt, and said what dreaming lasses say;  
How handsome Frederick was, by all con-  
fess'd,

How well he look'd, how very well he dress'd;  
With learning much, that would for both  
provide,

His mother's darling, and his father's pride;  
And then he loves me more than mind can  
guess,

Than heart conceive, or eloquence express.

'No letter came a doubtful mind to ease,  
And, what was worse, no Frederick came to  
please;

To college gone—so thought our little maid—  
But not to see me! I was much afraid;  
I walk'd the garden round, and deeply sigh'd,  
When grandmamma grew faint! and dropt,  
and died:

A fate so awful and so sudden drove  
All else away, and half extinguish'd love.

'Strange people came; they search'd the  
house around,  
And, vulgar wretches! sold whate'er they  
found:

The secret hoards that in the drawers were  
kept,

The silver toys that with the tokens slept,  
The precious beads, the corals with their bells,  
That laid secure, lock'd up in secret cells,  
The costly silk, the tabby, the brocade,  
The very garment for the wedding made,  
Were brought to sale, with many a jest  
thereon!

"Going—a bridal dress—for—Going!—  
Gone."

That ring, dear pledge of early love and true,  
That to the wedded finger almost grew,  
Was sold for six and ten-pence to a Jew!

'Great was the fancied worth; but ah!  
how small

The sum thus made, and yet how valued all!  
But all that to the shameful service went  
Just paid the bills, the burial, and the rent;  
And I and Biddy, poor deserted maids!  
Were turn'd adrift to seek for other aids.

'Now left by all the world, as I beheved,  
I wonder'd much that I so little grieved;  
Yet I was frighten'd at the painful view  
Of shiftless want, and saw not what to do:  
In times like this the poor have little dread,  
They can but work, and they shall then be  
fed;

And Biddy cheer'd me with such thoughts  
as this,

"You'll find the poor have their enjoyments,  
Miss!"

Indeed I saw, for Biddy took me home  
To a forsaken hovel's cold and gloom;  
And while my tears in plenteous flow were  
shed,

With her own hands she placed her proper bed,  
Reserved for need—A fire was quickly made,  
And food, the purchase for the day, display'd;  
She let in air to make the dampst retire,  
Then placed her sad companion at her fire;  
She then began her wonted peace to feel,  
She bought her wool, and sought her favourite  
wheel,

That as she turn'd, she sang with sober glee,  
"Begone, dull Care! I'll have no more with  
thee;"

Then turn'd to me, and bade me weep no  
more,

But try and taste the pleasures of the poor.

'When dinner came, on table brown and bare  
Were placed the humblest forms of earthen-  
ware,

With one blue dish, on which our food was  
placed,

For appetite provided, not for taste:  
I look'd disgusted, having lately seen  
All so minutely delicate and clean;  
Yet, as I sate, I found to my surprise  
A vulgar kind of inclination rise,

And near my humble friend, and nearer drew,  
Tried the strange food, and was partaker too.

'I walk'd at eve, but not where I was seen,  
And thought, with sorrow, what can Frederick  
mean?

I must not write, I said, for I am poor;  
And then I wept till I could weep no more.

'Kind-hearted Biddy tried my griefs to heal,  
"This is a nothing to what others feel;  
Life has a thousand sorrows worse than this,  
A lover lost is not a fortune, Miss!  
One goes, another comes, and which is best  
There is no telling—set your heart at rest."

'At night we pray'd—I dare not say a word  
Of our devotion, it was so absurd;  
And very pious upon Biddy's part,  
But mine were all effusions of the heart;  
While she her angels call'd their peace to shed,  
And bless the corners of our little bed.  
All was a dream! I said, is this indeed  
To be my life? and thus to lodge and feed,  
To pay for what I have, and work for what

I need?

Must I be poor? and Frederick, if we meet,  
Would not so much as know me in the street?  
Or, as he walk'd with ladies, he would try  
To be engaged as we were passing by—  
And then I wept to think that I should grow  
Like them whom he would be ashamed to  
know.

'On the third day, while striving with my  
fate,

And hearing Biddy all its comforts state,  
Talking of all her neighbours, all her schemes,  
Her stories, merry jests, and warning dreams;  
With tales of mirth and murder! O! the  
nights

Past, said the maiden, in such dear delights,  
And I was thinking, can the time arrive  
When I shall thus be humbled, and sur-  
vive?—

Then I beheld a horse and handsome gig,  
With the good air, tall form, and comely wig  
Of Doctor Mackey—I in fear began  
To say, Good heaven, preserve me from the  
man!

But fears ill reason,—heaven to such a mind  
Had lent a heart compassionate and kind.

'From him I learnt that one had call'd to  
know

What with my hand my parents could bestow;  
And when he learn'd the truth, in high disdain  
He told my fate, and home return'd again.

"Nay, be not grieved, my lovely girl; but few  
Wed the first love, however kind and true;  
Something there comes to break the strongest  
vow,

Or mine had been my gentle Mattie now.  
When the good lady died—but let me leave  
All gloomy subjects—'tis not good to grieve."

' Thus the kind Scotchman soothed me : he sustain'd

A father's part, and my submission gain'd :  
Then my affection ; and he often told  
My sterner parent that her heart was cold :  
He grew in honour—he obtain'd a name—  
And now a favourite with the place became ;  
To me most gentle, he would condescend  
To read and reason, be the guide and friend ;  
He taught me knowledge of the wholesome

kind,

And fill'd with many a useful truth my mind :  
Life's common burden daily lighter grew ;  
And even Frederick lessen'd in my view :  
Cold and repulsive as he once appear'd,  
He was by every generous act endear'd ;  
And, above all, that he with ardour fill'd  
My soul for truth—a love by him instill'd ;  
Till my mamma grew jealous of a maid  
To whom an husband such attention paid :  
Not grossly jealous ; but it gave her pain,  
And she observed, " He made her daughter vain ;  
And what his help to one who must not look  
To gain her bread by poring on a book ? "

' This was distress ; but this, and all beside,  
Was lost in grief—my kinder parent died ;  
When praised and loved, when joy and health  
he gave,

He sank lamented to an early grave :  
Then love and wo—the parent and the child,  
Lost in one grief, allied and reconciled.

' Yet soon a will, that left me half his worth,  
To the same spirit gave a second birth :  
But 'twas a mother's spleen ; and she indeed  
Was sick, and sad, and had of comfort need ;  
I watch'd the way her anxious spirit took,  
And often found her musing o'er a book ;  
She changed her dress, her church, her priest,  
her prayer,

Join'd a new sect, and sought her comforts  
there ;  
Some strange coarse people came, and were  
so free

In their addresses, they offended me ;  
But my mamma threw all her pride away—  
More humble she as more assuming they.

" And what," they said, as having power,  
" are now

The inward conflicts ? do you strive ? and  
how ? "

Themselves confessing thoughts so new and  
wild,

I thought them like the visions of a child.

" Could we," they ask, " our best good deeds  
condemn ?

And did we long to touch the garment's hem ?  
And was it so with us ? for so it was with  
them."

' A younger few assumed a softer part,  
And tried to shake the fortress of my heart ;  
To this my pliant mother lent her aid,  
And wish'd the winning of her erring maid :  
I was constrain'd her female friends to hear ;  
But suffer'd not a bearded convert near :  
Though more than one attempted, with their  
whine,

And " Sister ! sister ! how that heart of  
thine ? "

But this was freedom I for ever check'd :  
Mine was a heart no brother could affect.

' But, " would I hear the preacher, and  
receive

The dropping dew of his discourse at eve ?  
The soft, sweet words ? " I gave two precious  
hours

To hear of gifts and graces, helps and powers ;  
When a pale youth, who should dismiss the  
flock,

Gave to my bosom an electric shock.

While in that act he look'd upon my face  
As one in that all-equalizing place :  
Nor, though he sought me, would he lay aside,  
Their cold, dead freedom, or their dull, sad  
pride.

' Of his conversion he with triumph spoke,  
Before he orders from a bishop took :

Then how his father's anger he had braved ;  
And, safe himself, his erring neighbours saved.  
Me he rejoiced a sister to behold

Among the members of his favourite fold ;  
He had not sought me, the availing call  
Demanded all his love, and had it all ;

But, now thus met, it must be heaven's design.  
Indeed ! I thought, it never shall be mine ;  
Yes, we must wed. He was not rich : and I  
Had of the earthly good a mean supply ;

But it sufficed. Of his conversion then  
He told, and labours in converting men ;  
For he was chosen all their bands among—  
Another Daniel ! honour'd, though so young.

' He call'd me sister : show'd me that he knew  
What I possess'd ; and told what it would do ;  
My looks, I judge, express'd my full disdain ;  
But it was given to the man in vain :  
They preach till they are proud, and pride  
disturbs the brain.



'Is this the youth once timid, mild, polite?  
How odious now, and sick'ning to the sight!  
Proud that he sees, and yet so truly blind,  
With all this blight and mildew on the mind!  
'Amazed, the solemn creature heard me vow  
That I was not disposed to take him now.

'Then, art thou changed, fair maiden?  
changed thy heart?'

I answered, 'No; but I perceive thou art.'

'Still was my mother sad, her nerves relax'd,  
And our small income for advice was tax'd;  
When I, who long'd for change and freedom,  
cried,

Let sea and Sidmouth's balmy air be tried;  
And so they were, and every neighbouring  
scene,

That make the bosom, like the clime, serene;  
Yet were her teachers loth to yield assent;  
And not without the warning voice we went;  
And there was secret counsel all unknown  
To me—but I had counsel of my own.

'And now there pass'd a portion of my time  
In ease delicious, and in joy sublime—  
With friends endear'd by kindness—with  
delight,—

In all that could the feeling mind excite,  
Or please, excited; walks in every place  
Where we could pleasure find and beauty  
trace,

Or views at night, where on the rocky steep  
Shines the full moon, or glitters on the deep.

'Yes, they were happy days; but they are  
fled!

All now are parted—part are with the dead!  
Still it is pleasure, though 'tis mix'd with pain,  
To think of joys that cannot live again!  
Here cannot live; but they excite desire  
Of purer kind, and heavenly thoughts inspire!

'And now my mother, weaken'd in her mind,  
Her will, subdued before, to me resign'd.  
Wean'd from her late directors, by degrees  
She sank resign'd, and only sought for ease:  
In a small town upon the coast we fix'd;  
Nor in amusement with associates mix'd.  
My years—but other mode will I pursue,  
And count my time by what I sought to do.

'And was that mind at ease? could I avow  
That no once leading thoughts engaged me  
now?

Was I convinced th' enthusiastic man  
Had ruin'd what the loving boy began?

'I answer doubting—I could still detect  
Feelings too soft—yet him I could reject—

Feelings that came when I had least employ,  
When common pleasures I could least enjoy—  
When I was pacing lonely in the rays  
Of a full moon, in lonely walks and ways—  
When I was sighing o'er a tale's distress,  
And paid attention to my Bible less.

'These found, I sought my remedies for  
these;

I suffer'd common things my mind to please,  
And common pleasures: seldom walk'd alone,  
Nor when the moon upon the waters shone;  
But then my candles lit, my window closed,  
My needle took, and with my neighbours  
prosed:

And in one year—nay, ere the end of one,  
My labour ended, and my love was done.  
My heart at rest, I boldly look'd within,  
And dared to ask it of its secret sin;  
Alas! with pride it answer'd, "Look around,  
And tell me where a better heart is found."  
And then I traced my virtues: O! how  
few,

In fact, they were, and yet how vain I grew;  
Thought of my kindness, condescension, ease,  
My will, my wishes, nay, my power to please;  
I judged me prudent, rational, discreet,  
And void of folly, falsehood and deceit;  
I read, not lightly, as I some had known,  
But made an author's meaning all my own;  
In short, what lady could a poet choose  
As a superior subject for his muse?

'So said my heart; and Conscience straight  
replied—

"I say the matter is not fairly tried:  
I am offended, hurt, dissatisfied;  
First of the Christian graces, let me see  
What thy pretensions to humility?  
Art thou prepared for trial? Wilt thou say  
I am this being, and for judgment pray?  
And with the gallant Frenchman, wilt thou  
cry,  
When to thy judge presented, thus am I—  
Thus was I formed—these talents I possess'd—  
So I employ'd them—and thou know'st the  
rest?"

'Thus Conscience; and she then a picture  
drew,

And bade me think and tremble at the view.  
One I beheld—a wife, a mother—go  
To gloomy scenes of wickedness and woe;  
She sought her way through all things vile  
and base,

And made a prison a religious place:

Fighting her way—the way that angels fight  
 With powers of darkness—to let in the light ;  
 Tell me, my heart, hast thou such victory won  
 As this, a sinner of thy sex, has done,  
 And calls herself a sinner ? What art thou ?  
 And where thy praise and exaltation now ?  
 Yet is she tender, delicate, and nice,  
 And shrinks from all depravity and vice ;  
 Shrinks from the ruffian gaze, the savage  
 gloom,

That reign where guilt and misery find an home :  
 Guilt chain'd, and misery purchased ; and  
 with them

All we abhor, abominate, condemn—  
 The look of scorn, the scowl, th' insulting leer  
 Of shame, all fix'd on her who ventures here :  
 Yet all she braved ! she kept her stedfast eye  
 On the dear cause, and brush'd the base-  
 ness by.

So would a mother press her darling child  
 Close to her breast, with tainted rags defiled.

' But thou hast talents truly ! say the ten :  
 Come, let us look at their improvement then.  
 What hast thou done to aid thy suffering kind,  
 To help the sick, the deaf, the lame, the blind ?  
 Hast thou not spent thy intellectual force  
 On books abstruse, in critical discourse ?  
 Wasting in useless energy thy days,  
 And idly listening to their common praise,  
 Who can a kind of transient fame dispense,  
 And say—"a woman of exceeding sense."

' Thus tried, and failing, the suggestions fled,  
 And a corrected spirit reign'd instead.

' My mother yet was living ; but the flame  
 Of life now flash'd, and fainter then became ;  
 I made it pleasant, and was pleased to see  
 A parent looking as a child to me.

' And now our humble place grew wond'rous  
 gay ;

Came gallant persons in their red array :  
 All strangers welcome there, extremely wel-  
 come they.

When in the church I saw inquiring eyes  
 Fix'd on my face with pleasure and surprise ;  
 And soon a knocking at my door was heard ;  
 And soon the lover of my youth appear'd—  
 Frederick, in all his glory, glad to meet,  
 And say, " his happiness was now complete."

' He told his flight from superstitious zeal ;  
 But first what torments he was doom'd to  
 feel :—

"The tender tears he saw from women fall—  
 The strong persuasions of the brethren all—

The threats of crazed enthusiasts, bound to  
 keep

The struggling mind, and awe the straying  
 sheep—

From these, their love, their curses, and their  
 creed,

Was I by reason and exertion freed."

' Then, like a man who often had been told  
 And was convinced success attends the bold,  
 His former purpose he renew'd, and swore  
 He never loved me half so well before :

Before he felt a something to divide  
 The heart, that now had not a love beside.

' In earlier times had I myself amused,  
 And first my swain perplex'd, and then  
 refused ;

Cure for conceit ;—but now in purpose grave,  
 Strong and decisive the reply I gave.

Still he would come, and talk as idlers do,  
 Both of his old associates and his new ;  
 Those who their dreams and reveries receive  
 For facts, and those who would not facts  
 believe.

' He now conceived that truth was hidden,  
 placed

Heknew not where, she never could be traced ;  
 " But that in every place, the world around  
 Might some resemblance of the nymph be  
 found :

Yet wise men knew these shadows to be vain,  
 Such as our true philosophers disdain,—  
 They laugh to see what vulgar minds pursue—  
 Truth, as a mistress, never in their view—  
 But there the shadow flies, and that, they  
 cry, is true."

' Thus, at the college and the meeting train'd,  
 My lover seem'd his acme to have gain'd ;  
 With some compassion I essay'd a cure :

" If truth be hidden, why art thou so sure ?"  
 This he mistook for tenderness, and cried,  
 " If sure of thee, I care not what beside !"  
 Compell'd to silence, I, in pure disdain,  
 Withdrew from one so insolent and vain ;  
 He then retired ; and I was kindly told,  
 " In pure compassion grew estranged and  
 cold."

' My mother died ; but, in my grief, drew near  
 A bosom friend, who dried the useless tears ;  
 We lived together : we combined our shares  
 Of the world's good, and learn'd to brave its  
 cares :

We were the ladies of the place, and found  
 Protection and respect the country round ;

We gave, and largely, for we wished to live  
In good repute—for this 'tis good to give;  
Our annual present to the priest convey'd  
Was kindly taken :—we in comfort pray'd ;  
There none molested in the crimson pew  
The worthy ladies, whom the vicar knew :  
And we began to think that life might be,  
Not happy all, but innocent, free.

'My friend in early life was bound to one  
Of gentle kindred, but a younger son.  
He fortune's smile with perseverance woo'd,  
And wealth beneath the burning sun pursued :  
There, urged by love and youthful hope, he  
went,  
Loth ; but 'twas all his fortune could present.  
From hence he wrote ; and, with a lover's  
fears,

And gloomy fondness, talk'd of future years ;  
To her devoted, his Priscilla found  
His faithful heart still suffering with its wound,  
That would not heal. A second time she  
heard ;

And then no more : nor lover since appear'd ;  
Year after year the country's fleet arrived,  
Confirm'd her fear, and yet her love survived ;  
It still was living ; yet her hope was dead,  
And youthful dreams, nay, youth itself, was  
fled ;

And he was lost : so urged her friends, so she  
At length believed, and thus retired with me ;  
She would a dedicated vestal prove,  
And give her virgin vows to heaven and love ;  
She dwelt with fond regret on pleasures past,  
With ardent hope on those that ever last ;  
Pious and tender, every day she view'd  
With solemn joy our perfect solitude ;  
Her reading, that which most delighted her,  
That soothed the passions, yet would gently  
stir ;

The tender, softening, melancholy strain,  
That caused not pleasure, but that vanquish'd  
pain,

In tears she read, and wept, and long'd to  
read again.

But other worlds were her supreme delight,  
And there, it seem'd, she long'd to take her  
flight :

Yet patient, pensive, arm'd by thoughts  
sublime,

She watch'd the tardy steps of lingering time

'My friend, with face that most would hand-  
some call,

Possess'd the charm that wins the heart of all ;

And, thrice entreated by a lover's prayer,  
She thrice refused him with determined air.

'No ! had the world one monarch, and  
was he

All that the heart could wish its lord to be,—  
Lovely and loving, generous, brave, and  
true,—

Vain were his hopes to waken hers anew !"  
For she was wedded to ideal views,  
And fancy's prospects, that she would not lose,  
Would not forego to be a mortal's wife,  
And wed the poor realities of life.

'There was a day, ere yet the autumn closed,  
When, ere her wintry wars, the earth reposed,  
When from the yellow weed the feathery  
crown,

Light as the curling smoke, fell slowly down ;  
When the wing'd insect settled in our sight,  
And waited wind to recommence her flight ;  
When the wide river was a silver sheet,  
And on the ocean slept th' unanchor'd fleet ;  
When from our garden, as we look'd above,  
There was no cloud, and nothing seem'd to  
move ;

Then was my friend in ecstasies—she cried,  
"There is, I feel there is, a world beside !  
Martha, dear Martha ! we shall hear not then  
Of hearts distress'd by good or evil men,  
But all will constant, tender, faithful be—  
So had I been, and so had one with me ;  
But in this world the fondest and the best  
Are the most tried, most troubled, and dis-  
tress'd :

This is the place for trial, here we prove,  
And there enjoy, the faithfulness of love.

"Nay, were he here in all the pride of youth,  
With honour, valour, tenderness, and truth,  
Entirely mine, yet what could I secure,  
Or who one day of comfort could insure ?

"No ! all is closed on earth, and there is  
now

Nothing to break th' indissoluble vow ;  
But in that world will be th' abiding bliss,  
That pays for every tear and sigh in this."

'Such her discourse, and more refined it  
grew,

Till she had all her glorious dream in view ;  
And she would further in that dream proceed  
Than I dare go, who doubtfully agreed :  
Smiling I ask'd, again to draw the soul  
From flight so high, and fancy to control,  
"If this be truth, the lover's happier way  
Is distant still to keep the purposed day ;

The real bliss would mar the fancied joy,  
And marriage all the dream of love destroy."

"She softly smiled, and as we gravely talk'd,  
We saw a man who up the gravel walk'd,  
Not quite erect, nor quite by age depress'd,  
A travell'd man, and as a merchant dress'd;  
Large chain of gold upon his watch he wore,  
Small golden buckles on his feet he bore;  
A head of gold his costly cane display'd,  
And all about him love of gold betray'd.

"This comely man moved onward, and a pair  
Of comely maidens met with serious air;  
Till one exclaim'd, and wildly look'd around,  
"O heav'n, 'tis Paul!" and dropt upon the  
ground;

But she recovered soon, and you must guess  
What then ensued, and how much happiness.  
They parted lovers, both distress'd to part!  
They met as neighbours, heal'd, and whole  
of heart:

She in his absence look'd to heaven for bliss,  
He was contented with a world like this;  
And she prepared in some new state to meet  
The man now seeking for some snug retreat.  
He kindly told her he was firm and true,  
Nor doubted her, and bade her then adieu!

"What shall I do?" the sighing maid began,  
"How lost the lover! O, how gross the man."

"For the plain dealer had his wish declared,  
Nor she, devoted victim! could be spared:  
He spoke as one decided; she as one  
Who fear'd the love, and would the lover shun.

"O Martha, sister of my soul! how dies  
Each lovely view! for can I truth disguise,  
That this is he? No! nothing shall persuade;  
This is a man the naughty world has made,  
Aneating, drinking, buying, bargaining man—  
And can I love him? No! I never can.

What once he was, what fancy gave beside,  
Full well I know, my love was then my pride;  
What time has done, what trade and travel  
wrought,

You see! and yet your sorrowing friend is  
sought;

But can I take him?"—"Take him not,"  
I cried,

"If so averse—but why so soon decide?"

"Meantime a daily guest the man appear'd,  
Set all his sail, and for his purpose steer'd;  
Loud and familiar, loving, fierce and free,  
He overpower'd her soft timidity;  
Who, weak and vain, and grateful to behold  
The man was hers, and hers would be the gold;

Thus sundry motives, more than I can name,  
Leagued on his part, and she a wife became.

"A home was offer'd, but I knew too well  
What comfort was with married friends to  
dwell;

I was resign'd, and had I felt distress,

Again a lover offer'd some redress;

Behold, a hero of the buskin hears

My loss, and with consoling love appears;

Frederick was now a hero on the stage,

In all its glories, rhapsody, and rage;

Again himself he offer'd, offer'd all

That his an hero of the kind can call.

He for my sake would hope of fame resign,  
And leave the applause of all the world for  
mine.

Hard fate was Frederick's never to succeed,  
Yet ever try—but so it was decreed:

His mind was weaken'd; he would laugh and  
weep,

And swore profusely I had murder'd sleep,  
Had quite unmann'd him, cleft his heart in  
twain,

And he should never be himself again.

"He was himself; weak, nervous, kind, and  
poor,

Ill dress'd and idle, he besieged my door,

Borrow'd,—or, worse, made verses on my  
charms,

And did his best to fill me with alarms;

I had some pity, and I sought the price

Of my repose—my hero was not nice;

There was a loan, and promise I should be

From all the efforts of his fondness free,

From hunger's future claims, or those of  
vanity.

"Yet," said he, bowing, "do to study take!

O! what a Desdemona wouldst thou make!"

Thus was my lover lost; yet even now

He claims one thought, and this we will allow.

"His father lived to an extreme old age,

But never kind!—his son had left the stage,

And gain'd some office, but an humble place,

And that he lost! Want sharpen'd his dis-  
grace,

Urged him to seek his father—but too late,  
His jealous brothers watch'd and barr'd the  
gate.

"The old man died; but there is one who  
pays

A moderate pension for his latter days,

Who, though assured inquiries will offend,

Is ever asking for this unknown friend;

Some partial lady, whom he hopes to find  
As to his wants so to his wishes kind.

"Bestill," a cool adviser sometimes writes—  
"Nay, but," says he, "the gentle maid invites—"

Do, let me know the young! the soft! the fair!"

"Old man," 'tis answer'd, "take thyself to prayer!"

Be clean, be sober, to thy priest apply,  
And—dead to all around thee—learn to die!"

'Now had I rest from life's strong hopes and fears,

And no disturbance mark'd the flying years;  
So on in quiet might those years have past,  
But for a light adventure, and a last.

A handsome boy, from school-day bondage free,

Came with mamma to gaze upon the sea;  
With soft blue eye he look'd upon the waves,  
And talk'd of treacherous rocks, and seamen's graves:

There was much sweetness in his boyish smile,  
And signs of feelings frank, that knew not guile.

'The partial mother, of her darling proud,  
Besought my friendship, and her own avow'd;  
She praised her Rupert's person, spirit, ease,  
How fond of study, yet how form'd to please;  
In our discourse he often bore a part,  
And talk'd, heaven bless him, of his feeling heart;

He spoke of pleasures souls like his enjoy,  
And hated Lovelace like a virtuous boy;  
He felt for Clementina's holy strife,  
And was Sir Charles as large and true as life:  
For Virtue's heroines was his soul distress'd;  
True love and guileless honour fill'd his breast,  
When, as the subjects drew the frequent sigh,  
The tear stood trembling in his large blue eye,  
And softly he exclaim'd, "Sweet, sweetest sympathy."

'When thus I heard the handsome stripling speak,

I smiled assent, and thought to pat his cheek;  
But when I saw the feelings blushing there,  
Signs of emotions strong, they said—'forbear!

'The youth would speak of his intent to live  
On that estate which heaven was pleased to give,

There with the partner of his joys to dwell,  
And nurse the virtues that he loved so well;  
The humble good of happy swains to share,  
And from the cottage drive distress and care;

To the dear infants make some pleasures known,

And teach, he gravely said, the virtues to his own.

'He loved to read in verse, and verse-like prose,

The softest tales of love-inflicted woes;  
When, looking fondly, he would smile and cry,  
"Is there not bliss in sensibility?"

'We walk'd together, and it seem'd not harm  
In linking thought with thought, and arm with arm,

Till the dear boy would talk too much of bliss,  
And indistinctly murmur—"such as this."

'When no maternal wish her heart beguiled,  
The lady call'd her son "the darling child;"  
When with some nearer view her speech began,

She changed her phrase, and said, "the good young man!"

And lost, when hinting of some future bride,  
The woman's prudence in the mother's pride.

'Still decent fear and conscious folly strove  
With fond presumption and aspiring love;  
But now too plain to me the strife appear'd,  
And what he sought I knew, and what he fear'd;

The trembling hand and frequent sigh disclosed

The wish that prudence, care, and time opposed.

'Was I not pleased, will you demand?—  
Amused

By boyish love, that woman's pride refused?  
This I acknowledge, and from day to day  
Resolved no longer at such game to play;  
Yet I forbore, though to my purpose true,  
And firmly fix'd to bid the youth adieu.

'There was a moonlight eve, serenely cool,  
When the vast ocean seem'd a mighty pool;  
Save the small rippling waves that gently beat,

We scarcely heard them falling, at our feet:  
His mother absent, absent every sound  
And every sight that could the youth confound;

The arm, fast lock'd in mine, his fear betray'd,  
And when he spoke not, his designs convey'd;  
He oft-times gasp'd for breath, he tried to speak,

And studying words, at last had words to seek.

'Silent the boy, by silence more betray'd,  
And feeling lest he should appear afraid,

He knelt abruptly, and his speech began—  
 "Pity the pangs of an unhappy man."

"Be sure," I answer'd, "and relieve them too—

But why that posture? What the woes to you?

To feel for others' sorrows is humane,  
 But too much feeling is our virtue's bane.

"Come, my dear Rupert! now your tale disclose,

That I may know the sufferer and his woes,  
 Know there is pain that wilful man endures,  
 That our reproof and not our pity cures;  
 For though for such assumed distress we grieve,

Since they themselves as well as us deceive,  
 Yet we assist not."—The unhappy youth,  
 Unhappy then, beheld not all the truth.

"O! what is this?" exclaim'd the dubious boy,

"Words that confuse the being they destroy?  
 So have I read the gods to madness drive  
 The man condemn'd with adverse fate to strive;

O! make thy victim though by misery sure,  
 And let me know the pangs I must endure;  
 For, like the Grecian warrior, I can pray  
 Falling, to perish in the face of day."

"Pretty, my Rupert; and it proves the use

Of all that learning which the schools produce:

But come, your arm—no trembling, but attend

To sober truth, and a maternal friend.

"You ask for pity?"—"O! indeed I do."

"Well then, you have it, and assistance too:  
 Suppose us married!"—"O! the heavenly thought!"

"Nay—nay, my friend, be you by wisdom taught;

For wisdom tells you, love would soon subside,

Fall, and make room for penitence and pride;  
 Then would you meet the public eye, and blame

Your private taste, and be o'erwhelm'd with shame:

How must it then your bosom's peace destroy

To hear it said, 'The mother and her boy!'

And then to show the sneering world it lies,  
 You would assume the man, and tyrannize;

Ev'n Time, Care's general soother, would augment

Your self-reproaching, growing discontent.

"Add twenty years to my precarious life,  
 And lo! your aged, feeble, wailing wife;  
 Displeased, displeasing, discontented, blamed;  
 Both, and with cause, ashaming and ashamed:  
 When I shall bend beneath a press of time,  
 Thou wilt be all erect in manhood's prime;  
 Then wilt thou fly to younger minds t' assuage  
 Thy bosom's pain, and I in jealous age  
 Shall move contempt, if still; if active, rage:  
 And though in anguish all my days are past,  
 Yet far beyond thy wishes they may last;  
 May last till thou, thy better prospects fled,  
 Shall have no comfort when thy wife is dead.

"Then thou in turn, though none will call thee old,

Will feel thy spirit fled, thy bosom cold;  
 No strong or eager wish to wake the will,  
 Life will appear to stagnate and be still,  
 As now with me it slumbers; O! rejoice  
 That I attend not to that pleading voice;  
 So will new hopes this troubled dream succeed,

And one will gladly hear my Rupert plead."

'Ask you, while thus I could the youth deny,  
 Was I unmoved?—Inexorable I,  
 Fix'd and determined: thrice he made his prayer,

With looks of sadness first, and then despair;  
 Thrice doom'd to bear refusal, not exempt,  
 At the last effort, from a slight contempt.

'Did his distress, his pains, your joy excite?—

No; but I fear'd his perseverance might.

Was there no danger in the moon's soft rays,

To hear the handsome stripling's earnest praise?

Was there no fear that while my words reproved

The eager youth, I might myself be moved?  
 Not for his sake alone I cried "persist  
 No more," and with a frown the cause dismiss'd.

'Seek you th' event?—I scarcely need reply,  
 Love, unreturn'd, will languish, pine, and die:

We lived awhile in friendship, and with joy  
 I saw depart in peace the amorous boy.

We met some ten years after, and he then  
 Was married, and as cool as married men;

He talk'd of war and taxes, trade and farms,  
And thought no more of me, or of my charms.

'Wespoke; and when, alluding to the past,  
Something of meaning in my look I cast,  
He, who could never thought or wish disguise,  
Look'd in my face with trouble and surprise;  
To kill reserve, I seized his arm, and cried,  
"Know me, my lord!" when laughing, he  
replied,

Wonder'd again, and look'd upon my face,  
And seem'd unwilling marks of time to trace;  
But soon I brought him fairly to confess,  
That boys in love judge ill of happiness.

'Love had his day—to graver subjects  
led,  
My will is govern'd, and my mind is fed;  
And to more vacant bosoms I resign  
The hopes and fears that once affected mine.'

## BOOK XII. SIR OWEN DALE

The Rector at the Hall—Why absent—He  
relates the Story of Sir Owen—His Marriage  
—Death of his Lady—His Mind acquires  
new Energy—His passions awake—His  
Taste and Sensibility—Admires a Lady—  
Camilla—Her Purpose—Sir Owen's Dis-  
appointment—His Spirit of Revenge—How  
gratified—The Dilemma of Love—An ex-  
ample of Forgiveness—Its Effect.

AGAIN the Brothers saw their friend the  
priest,  
Who shared the comforts he so much in-  
creased;  
Absent of late—and thus the squire address'd,  
With welcome smile, his ancient friend and  
guest.

'What has detain'd thee? some parochial  
case?

Some man's desertion, or some maid's dis-  
grace?

Or wert thou call'd, as parish priest, to give  
Name to a new-born thing that would not live,  
That its weak glance upon the world had  
thrown,

And shrank in terror from the prospect  
shown?

Or hast thou heard some dying wretch deplore,  
That of his pleasures he could taste no more?  
Who wish'd thy aid his spirits to sustain,  
And drive away the fears that gave him pain?  
For priests are thought to have a patent  
charm

To ease the dying sinner of alarm:  
Or was thy business of the carnal sort,  
And thou wert gone a patron's smile to court,  
And Croft or Cresswell would'st to Binning  
lead

Or take, kind soul! whatever could be had?

Once more I guess: th' election now is near;  
My friend, perhaps, is sway'd, by hope or fear,  
And all a patriot's wishes, forth to ride,  
And hunt for votes to prop the fav'rite side?

'More private duty call'd me hence, to pay  
My friends respect on a rejoicing day,'  
Replied the rector: 'there is born a son,  
Pride of an ancient race, who pray'd for one,  
And long desponded. Would you hear the  
tale—

Ask, and 'tis granted—of Sir Owen Dale?'

'Grant,' said the Brothers, 'for we humbly  
ask;

Ours be the gratitude, and thine the task:  
Yet dine we first: then to this tale of thine,  
As to thy sermon, seriously incline:  
In neither case our rector shall complain,  
Of this recited, that composed in vain.

'Something we heard of vengeance, who  
appall'd,

Like an infernal spirit, him who call'd;  
And, ere he vanished, would perform his part,  
Inflicting tortures on the wounded heart;  
Of this but little from report we know:  
If you the progress of revenge can show,  
Give it, and all its horrors, if you please,  
We hear our neighbour's sufferings much at  
ease.

'Is it not so? For do not men delight—  
We call them men—our bruisers to excite,  
And urge with bribing gold, and feed them  
for the fight?

Men beyond common strength, of giant size,  
And threatening terrors in each other's eyes;  
When in their naked, native force display'd,  
Look answers look, affrighting and afraid;  
While skill, like spurs and feeding, gives the  
arm

The wicked power to do the greater harm:

Maim'd in the strife, the falling man sustains  
Th' insulting shout, that aggravates his  
pains :—

Man can bear this ; and shall thy hearers heed  
A tale of human sufferings ? Come ! proceed.'

Thus urged, the worthy rector thought it  
meet

Some moral truth, as preface to repeat ;  
Reflection serious,—common-place, 'tis  
true,—

But he would act as he was wont to do,  
And bring his morals in his neighbour's view.

'O ! how the passions, insolent and strong,  
Bear our weak minds their rapid course along ;  
Make us the madness of their will obey ;  
Then die, and leave us to our griefs a prey !'

'Sir Owen Dale his fortieth year had seen,  
With temper placid, and with mind serene ;  
Rich ; early married to an easy wife,  
They led in comfort a domestic life :  
He took of his affairs a prudent care,  
And was by early habit led to spare ;  
Not as a miser, but in pure good taste,  
That scorn'd the idle wantonness of waste.

'In fact, the lessons he from prudence took  
Were written in his mind, as in a book :  
There what to do he read, and what to shun ;  
And all commanded was with promptness done ;  
He seem'd without a passion to proceed,  
Or one whose passions no correction need ;  
Yet some believed those passions only slept,  
And were in bounds by early habits kept :  
Curb'd as they were by fetters worn so long,  
There were who judged them a rebellious  
throng.

'To these he stood, not as a hero true,  
Who fought his foes, and in the combat slew,  
But one who all those foes, when sleeping,  
found,

And, unresisted, at his pleasure bound.

'We thought—for I was one—that we espied  
Some indications strong of dormant pride ;  
It was his wish in peace with all to live ;  
And he could pardon, but could not forgive :  
Nay, there were times when stern defiance  
shook

The moral man, and threaten'd in his look.

'Should these fierce passions—so we reason'd  
—break

Their long-worn chain, what ravage will they  
make !

In vain will prudence then contend with pride,  
And reason vainly bid revenge subside ;  
Anger will not to meek persuasion bend,  
Nor to the pleas of hope or fear attend :  
What curb shall, then, in their disorder'd race,  
Check the wild passions ? what the calm  
replace ?

Virtue shall strive in vain ; and has he help  
in grace ?

'While yet the wife with pure discretion  
ruled,

The man was guided, and the mind was  
school'd ;

But then that mind unaided ran to waste :  
He had some learning, but he wanted taste :  
Placid, not pleased—contented, not em-  
ploy'd,—

He neither time improved, nor life enjoy'd.

'That wife expired, and great the loss sus-  
tain'd,

Though much distress he neither felt nor  
feign'd ;

He loved not warmly ; but the sudden stroke  
Deeply and strongly on his habits broke.

'He had no child to soothe him, and his  
farm,

His sports, his speculations, lost their charm ;  
Then would he read and travel, would fre-  
quent

Life's busy scenes, and forth Sir Owen went :  
The mind, that now was free, unfix'd, un-  
check'd,

Read and observed with wonderful effect ;  
And still the more he gain'd, the more he  
long'd

To pay that mind his negligence had wrong'd ;  
He felt his pleasures rise as he improved ;  
And, first enduring, then the labour loved.

'But, by the light let in, Sir Owen found  
Some of those passions had their chain un-  
bound ;

As from a trance they rose to act their part,  
And seize, as due to them, a feeling heart.

'His very person now appear'd refined,  
And took some graces from th' improving  
mind :

He grew polite without a fix'd intent,  
And to the world a willing pupil went.

'Restore him twenty years,—restore him  
ten,—

And bright had been his earthly prospect then ;  
But much refinement, when it late arrives,  
May be the grace, not comfort, of our lives.



'Now had Sir Owen feeling ; things of late  
Indifferent, he began to love or hate ;  
What once could neither good nor ill impart  
Now pleased the senses, and now touch'd the  
heart ;

Prospects and pictures struck th' awaken'd  
sight,

And each new object gave a new delight.  
He, like th' imperfect creature who had shaped  
A shroud to hide him, had at length escaped ;  
Changed from his grub-like state, to crawl no  
more,

But a wing'd being, pleased and form'd to  
soar.

'Now, said his friends, while thus his views  
improve,

And his mind softens, what if he should love ?  
True ; life with him has yet serene appear'd,  
And therefore love in wisdom should be  
fear'd :

Forty and five his years, and then to sigh  
For beauty's favour !—Son of frailty, fly !

'Alas ! he loved ; it was our fear, but ours,  
His friends alone. He doubted not his pow'rs  
To win the prize, or to repel the charm,  
To gain the battle, or escape the harm ;  
For he had never yet resistance proved,  
Nor fear'd that friends should say—"Alas !  
he loved."

'Younger by twenty years, Camilla found  
Her face unrivall'd when she smiled or  
frown'd :

Of all approved ; in manner, form, and air,  
Made to attract ; gay, elegant, and fair :  
She had, in beauty's aid, a fair pretence  
To cultivated, strong intelligence ;

For she a clear and ready mind had fed  
With wholesome food ; unhurt by what she  
read ;

She loved to please ; but, like her dangerous  
sex,

To please the more whom she design'd to  
vex.

'This heard Sir Owen, and he saw it true ;  
It promised pleasure, promised danger too ;  
But this he knew not then, or slighted if he  
knew.

'Yet he delay'd, and would by trials prove  
That he was safe ; would see the signs of love ;  
Would not address her while a fear remain'd ;  
But win his way, assured of what he gain'd.

'This saw the lady, not displeased to find  
A man at once so cautious and so blind :

She saw his hopes that she would kindly show  
Proofs of her passion—then she his should  
know.

"So, when my heart is bleeding in his sight,  
His love acknowledged will the pains requite ;  
It is, when conquer'd, he the heart regards ;  
Well, good Sir Owen ! let us play our cards."

'He spake her praise in terms that love  
affords,

By words select, and looks surpassing words :  
Kindly she listen'd, and in turn essay'd  
To pay th' applauses—and she amply paid  
A beauty flattering!—beauteous flatterers  
feel

The ill you cause, when thus in praise you  
deal ;

For surely he is more than man, or less,  
When praised by lips that he would die to  
press,

And yet his senses undisturbed can keep,  
Can calmly reason, or can soundly sleep.

'Not so Sir Owen ; him Camilla praised,  
And lofty hopes and strong emotions raised ;  
This had alone the strength of man subdued ;  
But this enchantress various arts pursued.

'Let others pray for music—others pray'd  
In vain :—Sir Owen ask'd, and was obey'd ;  
Let others, walking, sue that arm to take,  
Unmoved she kept it for Sir Owen's sake ;  
Each small request she granted, and though  
small,

He thought them pledges of her granting all.

'And now the lover, casting doubt aside,  
Urged the fond suit that—could not be  
denied ;

Joy more than reverence moved him when  
he said,

"Now banish all my fears, angelic maid !"  
And as she paused for words, he gaily cried,  
"I must not, cannot, will not be denied."

'Ah ! good Sir Owen, think not favours,  
such

As artful maids allow, amount to much ;  
The sweet, small, poison'd baits, that take  
the eye

And win the soul of all who venture nigh.

'Camilla listen'd, paused, and look'd surprise,  
Fair witch ! exulting in her witcheries !  
She turn'd aside her face, withdrew her hand,  
And softly said, "Sir, let me understand."

"Nay, my dear lady ! what can words  
explain,

If all my looks and actions plead in vain ?

I love."—She show'd a cool respectful air,  
And he began to falter in his prayer,  
Yet urged her kindness—Kindness she confess'd,

It was esteem, she felt it, and express'd,  
For her dear father's friend ; and was it right  
That friend of his—she thought of hers—to  
slight ?

'This to the wond'ring lover strange and  
new,  
And false appear'd—he would not think it  
true :

Still he pursued the lovely prize, and still  
Heard the cold words, design'd his hopes to  
kill ;

He felt dismay'd, as he perceived success  
Had inverse ratio, more obtaining less ;  
And still she grew more cool in her replies,  
And talk'd of age and improprieties.

'Then to his friends, although it hurt his  
pride,

And to the lady's, he for aid applied ;  
Who kindly woo'd for him, but strongly were  
denied.

And now it was those fiercer passions rose,  
Urged by his love to murder his repose ;  
Shame shook his soul to be deceived so long,  
And fierce revenge for such contemptuous  
wrong ;

Jealous he grew, and jealousy supplied  
His mind with rage, unsooth'd, unsatisfied ;  
And grievous were the pangs of deeply  
wounded pride.

His generous soul had not the grief sustain'd,  
Had he not thought, "revenge may be  
obtain'd."

'Camilla grieved, but grief was now too late ;  
She hush'd her fears, and left th' event to fate ;  
Four years elapsed, nor knew Sir Owen yet  
How to repay the meditated debt ;  
The lovely foe was in her thirtieth year,  
Nor saw the favourite of the heart appear ;  
'Tis sure less sprightly the fair nymph became,  
And spoke of former levities with shame :  
But this, alas ! was not in time confess'd,  
And vengeance waited in Sir Owen's breast.

'But now the time arrives—the maid must  
feel

And grieve for wounds that she refused to heal.  
Sir Owen, childless, in his love had rear'd  
A sister's son, and now the youth appear'd  
In all the pride of manhood, and, beside,  
With all a soldier's spirit and his pride :

Valiant and poor, with all that arms bestow,  
And wants that captains in their quarters  
know ;

Yet to his uncle's generous heart was due  
The praise, that wants of any kind were few.

'When he appear'd, Sir Owen felt a joy  
Unknown before, his vengeance bless'd the  
boy—

"To him I dare confide a cause so just ;  
Love him she may—O ! could I say, she must."

'Thus fix'd, he more than usual kindness  
show'd,

Nor let the captain name the debt he owed ;  
But when he spoke of gratitude, exclaim'd,  
'My dearest Morden ! make me not ashamed ;  
Each for a friend should do the best he can,  
The most obliged is the obliging man ;  
But if you wish to give as well as take,  
You may a debtor of your uncle make."

'Morden was earnest in his wish to know  
How he could best his grateful spirit show.

'Now the third dinner had their powers  
renew'd,

And fruit and wine upon the table stood ;  
The fire brought comfort, and the warmth it  
lent

A cheerful spirit to the feelings sent,  
When thus the uncle—"Morden, I depend  
On you for aid—assist me as a friend :  
Full well I know that you would much forego,  
And much endure, to wreak me on my foe.  
Charles, I am wrong'd, insulted—nay, be still,  
Nor look so fiercely,—there are none to kill.

"I loved a lady, somewhat late in life,  
Perhaps too late, and would have made a wife ;  
Nay, she consented ; for consent I call

The mark'd distinction that was seen of all,  
And long was seen ; but when she knew my  
pain,

Saw my first wish her favour to obtain,  
And ask her hand—no sooner was it ask'd,  
Than she the lovely Jezebel unmask'd ;  
And by her haughty airs, and scornful  
pride,

My peace was wounded—nay, my reason  
tried ;

I felt despised and fallen when we met,  
And she, O folly ! looks too lovely yet ;  
Yet love no longer in my bosom glows,  
But my heart warms at the revenge it owes.

"O ! that I saw her with her soul on fire,  
Desperate from love, and sickening with  
desire ;

While all beheld her just, unpitied pain,  
Grown in neglect, and sharpen'd by disdain !  
Let her be jealous of each maid she sees,  
Striving by every fruitless art to please,  
And when she fondly looks, let looks and  
fondness tease !

So, lost on passion's never resting sea,  
Hopeless and helpless, let her think of me.

"Charles, thou art handsome, nor canst  
want the art

To warm a cold or win a wanton heart ;  
Be my avenger "——

Charles, with smile, not vain,  
Nor quite unmix'd with pity and disdain,  
Sate mute in wonder ; but he sate not long  
Without reflection :—Was Sir Owen wrong ?  
"So must I think ; for can I judge it right  
To treat a lovely lady with despise ?  
Because she play'd too roughly with the love  
Of a fond man whom she could not approve,  
And yet to vex him for the love he bore  
Is cause enough for his revenge, and more.

"But, thoughts, to council !—Do I wear  
a charm

That will preserve my citadel from harm ?  
Like the good knight, I have a heart that feels  
The wounds that beauty makes and kindness  
heals :

Beauty she has, it seems, but is not kind—  
So found Sir Owen, and so I may find.

"Yet why, O ! heart of tinder, why afraid ?  
Comes so much danger from so fair a maid ?

"Wilt thou be made a voluntary prize  
To the fierce firing of two wicked eyes ?  
Think her a foe, and on the danger rush,  
Nor let thy kindred for a coward blush.

"But how if this fair creature should incline  
To think too highly of this love of mine,  
And, taking all my counterfeit address  
For sterling passion, should the like profess ?

"Nay, this is folly ; or if I perceive  
Ought of the kind, I can but take my leave ;  
And if the heart should feel a little sore,  
Contempt and anger will its ease restore.

"Then, too, to his all-bounteous hand I owe  
All I possess, and almost all I know ;  
And shall I for my friend no hazard run,  
Who seeks no more for all his love has done ?

"'Tis but to meet and bow, to talk and  
smile,

To act a part, and put on love awhile :  
And the good knight shall see, this trial made,  
That I have just his talents to persuade ;

For why the lady should her heart bestow  
On me, or I of her enamour'd grow,  
There's none can reason give, there's none  
can danger show."

'These were his rapid thoughts, and then  
he spoke.

"I make a promise, and will not revoke ;  
You are my judge in what is fit and right,  
And I obey you—bid me love or fight ;  
Yet had I rather, so the act could meet  
With your concurrence,—not to play the  
cheat ;

In a fair cause "——"Charles, fighting for  
your king,

Did you e'er judge the merits of the thing ?  
Show me a monarch who has cause like mine,  
And yet what soldier would his cause decline ?"

'Poor Charles or saw not, or refused to see,  
How weak the reasoning of our hopes may be,  
And said—"Dear uncle, I my king obey'd,  
And for his glory's sake the soldier play'd ;  
Now a like duty shall your nephew rule,  
And for your vengeance I will play the fool."

'Twas well ; but ere they parted for repose,  
A solemn oath must the engagement close.

"Swear to me, nephew, from the day you  
meet

This cruel girl, there shall be no deceit ;  
That by all means approved and used by man  
You win this dangerous woman, if you can ;  
That being won, you my commands obey,  
Leave her lamenting, and pursue your way ;  
And that, as in my business, you will take  
My will as guide, and no resistance make :  
Take now an oath—within the volume look,  
There is the Gospel—swear, and kiss the  
book."

"It cannot be," thought Charles, "he  
cannot rest

In this strange humour,—it is all a jest,  
All but dissimulation—Well, sir, there ;  
Now I have sworn as you would have me  
swear."

"'Tis well," the uncle said in solemn tone ;  
"Now send me vengeance, Fate, and groan  
for groan !"

'The time is come : the soldier now must  
meet

Th' unconscious object of the sworn deceit.  
They meet ; each other's looks the pair  
explore,

And, such their fortune, wish'd to part no  
more.

Whether a man is thus disposed to break  
 An evil compact he was forced to make,  
 Or whether some contention in the breast  
 Will not permit a feeling heart to rest;  
 Or was it nature, who in every case  
 Has made such mind subjected to such face;  
 Whate'er the cause, no sooner met the pair  
 Than both began to love, and one to feel  
 despair.

'But the fair damsel saw with strong delight  
 Th' impression made, and gloried in the sight:  
 No chilling doubt alarm'd her tender breast,  
 But she rejoiced in all his looks profess'd;  
 Long ere his words her lover's hopes convey'd  
 They warm'd the bosom of the conscious  
 maid;

One spirit seem'd each nature to inspire,  
 And the two hearts were fix'd in one desire.

"Now," thought the courteous maid, "my  
 father's friend

Will ready pardon to my fault extend;  
 He shall no longer lead that hermit's life,  
 But love his mistress in his nephew's wife;  
 My humble duty shall his anger kill,  
 And I who fled his love will meet his will,  
 Prevent his least desire, and every wish fulfil."

'Hail, happy power! that to the present  
 lends

Such views; not all on Fortune's wheel  
 depends;

Hope, fair enchantress, drives each cloud  
 away,

And now enjoys the glad, but distant day.

'Still fears ensued; for love produces fear.—  
 "To this dear maid can I indeed be dear?  
 My fatal oath, alas! I now repent;  
 Stern is his purpose, he will not relent;  
 Would, ere that oath, I had Camilla seen!  
 I had not then my honour's victim been:  
 I must be honest, yet I know not how,  
 'Tis crime to break, and death to keep my  
 vow."

'Sir Owen closely watch'd both maid and  
 man,

And saw with joy proceed his cruel plan;  
 Then gave his praise—"She has it—has it  
 deep

In her capricious heart,—it murders sleep;  
 You see the looks that grieve, you see the  
 eyes that weep;

Now breathe again, dear youth, the kindling  
 fire,

And let her feel what she could once inspire."

'Alas! obedience was an easy task,  
 So might he cherish what he meant to ask;  
 He ventured soon, for Love prepared his way,  
 He sought occasion, he forbade delay;  
 In spite of vow foregone he taught the youth  
 The looks of passion, and the words of truth;  
 In spite of woman's caution, doubt and fear,  
 He bade her credit all she wish'd to hear;  
 An honest passion ruled in either breast,  
 And both believed the truth that both pro-  
 fess'd.

'But now, 'mid all her new-born hopes, the  
 eyes

Of fair Camilla saw through all disguise,  
 Reserve, and apprehension—Charles, who  
 now

Grieved for his duty, and abhor'd his vow,  
 Told the full fact, and it endear'd him more;  
 She felt her power, and pardon'd all he swore,  
 Since to his vow he could his wish prefer,  
 And loved the man who gave his world for  
 her.

'What must they do, and how their work  
 begin,

Can they that temper to their wishes win?  
 They tried, they fail'd; and all they did  
 t' assuage

The tempest of his soul provoked his rage;  
 The uncle met the youth with angry look,  
 And cried, "Remember, sir, the oath you  
 took;

You have my pity, Charles, but nothing more,  
 Death, and death only, shall her peace restore;  
 And am I dying?—I shall live to view  
 The harlot's sorrow, and enjoy it too.

"How! Words offend you? I have borne  
 for years

Unheeded anguish, shed derided tears,  
 Felt scorn in every look, endured the stare  
 Of wondering fools, who never felt a care;  
 On me all eyes were fix'd, and I the while  
 Sustain'd the insult of a rival's smile.

"And shall I now—entangled thus my foe,  
 My honest vengeance for a boy forego?

A boy forewarn'd, forearm'd? Shall this be  
 borne,

And I be cheated, Charles, and thou for-  
 sworn?

Hope not, I say, for thou mayst change as  
 well

The sentence graven on the gates of hell—  
 Here bid adieu to hope,—here hopeless beings  
 dwell.

"But does she love thee, Charles? I cannot live

Dishonour'd, unrevenged—I may forgive,  
But to thy oath I bind thee; on thy soul  
Seek not my injured spirit to control;  
Seek not to soften, I am hard of heart,  
Harden'd by insult:—leave her now, and  
part,  
And let me know she grieves while I enjoy  
her smart."

'Charles first in anger to the knight replied,  
Then felt the clog upon his soul, and sigh'd:  
To his obedience made his wishes stoop,  
And now admitted, now excluded hope;  
As lovers do, he saw a prospect fair,  
And then so dark, he sank into despair.

'The uncle grieved; he even told the youth  
That he was sorry, and it seem'd a truth;  
But though it vex'd, it varied not his mind,  
He bound himself, and would his nephew  
bind.

"I told him this, placed danger in his view,  
Bade him be certain, bound him to be true;  
And shall I now my purposes reject,  
Because my warnings were of no effect?"

'Thus felt Sir Owen as a man whose cause  
Is very good—it had his own applause.'

'Our knight a tenant had in high esteem,  
His constant boast, when justice was his  
theme:

He praised the farmer's sense, his shrewd  
discourse,

Free without rudeness, manly, and not coarse;  
As farmer, tenant, nay, as man, the knight  
Thought Ellis all that is approved and right;  
Then he was happy, and some envy drew,  
For knowing more than other farmers knew;  
They call'd him learned, and it sooth'd their  
pride,

While he in his was pleased and gratified.

'Still more t' offend, he to the altar led  
The vicar's niece, to early reading bred;  
Who, though she freely ventured on the life,  
Could never fully be the farmer's wife;  
She had a softness, gentleness, and ease,  
Sure a coarse mind to humble and displease:  
O! had she never known a fault beside,  
How vain their spite, how impotent their  
pride!

'Three darling girls the happy couple bless'd,  
Who now the sweetest lot of life possess'd;

For what can more a grateful spirit move  
Than health, with competence, and peace,  
with love?

Ellis would sometimes, thriving man! retire  
To the town inn, and quit the parlour fire;  
But he was ever kind where'er he went,  
And trifling sums in his amusement spent:  
He bought, he thought for her—she should  
have been content:

Oft, when he cash received at Smithfield mart,  
At Cranbourn-alley he would leave a part;  
And, if to town he follow'd what he sold,  
Sure was his wife a present to behold.

'Still, when his evenings at the inn were  
spent,

She mused at home in sullen discontent;  
And, sighing, yielded to a wish that some  
With social spirit to the farm would come:  
There was a farmer in the place, whose name,  
And skill in rural arts, was known to fame;  
He had a pupil, by his landlord sent,  
On terms that gave the parties much content;  
The youth those arts, and those alone, should  
learn,

With aught beside his guide had no concern:  
He might to neighb'ring towns or distant ride,  
And there amusements seek without a guide:  
With handsome prints his private room was  
graced,

His music there, and there his books were  
placed:

Men knew not if he farm'd, but they allow'd  
him taste.

'Books, prints, and music, cease, at times,  
to charm,

And sometimes men can neither ride nor farm;  
They look for kindred minds, and Cecil found  
In farmer Ellis, one inform'd and sound;  
But in his wife—I hate the fact I tell—  
A lovely being, who could please too well:  
And he was one who never would deny  
Himself a pleasure, or indeed would try.

'Early and well the wife of Ellis knew  
Where danger was, and trembled at the view;  
So evil spirits tremble, but are still  
Evil, and lose not the rebellious will:

She sought not safety from the fancied crime,  
"And why retreat before the dangerous time?"

'Oft came the student of the farm and read,  
And found his mind with more than reading  
fed:

This Ellis seeing, left them, or he staid,  
As pleased him, not offended nor afraid:

He came in spirits with his girls to play,  
Then ask excuse, and, laughing, walk away :  
When, as he entered, Cecil ceased to read,  
He would exclaim, " Proceed, my friend, pro-  
ceed ! "

Or, sometimes weary, would to bed retire,  
And fear and anger by his ease inspire.

" My conversation does he then despise ?  
Leaves he this slighted face for other eyes ? "  
So said Alicia ; and she dwelt so long  
Upon that thought, to leave her was to wrong.

' Alas ! the woman loved the soothing tongue,  
That yet pronounced her beautiful and young ;  
The tongue that, seeming careless, ever  
praised ;

The eye that roving, on her person gazed ;  
The ready service, on the watch to please ;  
And all such sweet, small courtesies as these.

' Still there was virtue, but a rolling stone  
On a hill's brow is not more quickly gone ;  
The slightest motion,—ceasing from our  
care,—

A moment's absence,—when we're not  
aware,—

When down it rolls, and at the bottom lies,  
Sunk, lost, degraded, never more to rise !  
Far off the glorious height from whence it  
fell,

With all things base and infamous to dwell.  
Friendship with woman is a dangerous thing—  
Thence hopes avow'd and bold confessions  
spring :

Frailties confess'd to other frailties lead,  
And new confessions new desires succeed ;  
And, when the friends have thus their hearts  
disclosed,

They find how little is to guilt opposed.

' The foe's attack will on the fort begin,  
When he is certain of a friend within.

' When all was lost,—or, in the lover's sight,  
When all was won,—the lady thought of  
flight.

" What ! sink a slave ? " she said, " and  
with deceit

The rigid virtue of a husband meet ?

No ! arm'd with death, I would his fury  
brave,

And own the justice of the blow he gave !

But thus to see him easy, careless, cold,

And his confiding folly to behold ;

To feel incessant fears that he should read,

In looks assumed, the cause whence they  
proceed,

I cannot brook ; nor will I here abide  
Till chance betrays the crime that shame  
would hide :

Fly with me, Henry ! " Henry sought in vain  
To soothe her terrors and her griefs restrain :  
He saw the lengths that women dared to go,  
And fear'd the husband both as friend and foe.  
Of farming weary—for the guilty mind  
Can no resource in guiltless studies find,  
Left to himself, his mother all unknown,  
His titled father, loth the boy to own,  
Had him to decent expectations bred,  
A favour'd offspring of a lawless bed ;  
And would he censure one who should pursue  
The way he took ? Alicia yet was new :  
Her passion pleased him : he agreed on flight :  
They fix'd the method, and they chose the  
night.

' Then, while the farmer read of public  
crimes,

Collating coolly Chronicles and Times,  
The flight was taken by the guilty pair,  
That made one passage in the columns there.

' The heart of Ellis bled ; the comfort, pride,  
The hope and stay of his existence died ;  
Rage from the ruin of his peace arose,  
And he would follow and destroy his foes ;  
Would with wild haste the guilty pair pursue,  
And when he found—Good heaven ! what  
would he do ?

' That wretched woman he would wildly seize,  
And agonize her heart, his own to ease ;  
That guilty man would grasp, and in her sight  
Insult his pangs, and her despair excite ;  
Bring death in view, and then the stroke  
suspend,

And draw out tortures till his life should end :  
O ! it should stand recorded in all time,  
How they transgress'd, and he avenged the  
crime !

' In this bad world should all his business  
cease,

He would not seek—he would not taste of  
peace ;

But wrath should live till vengeance had her  
due,

And with his wrath his life should perish too.

' His girls—not his—he would not be so  
weak—

Child was a word he never more must speak !  
How did he know what villains had defiled  
His honest bed ?—He spurn'd the name of  
child :

Keep them he must ; but he would coarsely  
hide  
Their forms, and nip the growth of woman's  
pride ;  
He would consume their flesh, abridge their  
food,  
And kill the mother-vice in their blood.

‘ All this Sir Owen heard, and grieved for all ;  
He with the husband mourn'd Alicia's fall ;  
But urged the vengeance with a spirit strong,  
As one whose own rose high against the  
wrong :

He saw his tenant by this passion moved,  
Shared in his wrath, and his revenge approved.

‘ Years now unseen, he mourn'd this ten-  
ant's fate,

And wonder'd how he bore his widow'd state ;  
Still he would mention Ellis with the pride  
Of one who felt himself to worth allied :  
Such were his notions—had been long, but  
now

He wish'd to see if vengeance lived, and how :  
He doubted not a mind so strong must feel  
Most righteously, and righteous measures deal.

‘ Then would he go, and haply he might find  
Some new excitement for a weary mind ;  
Might learn the miseries of a pair undone,  
One scorn'd and hated, lost and perish'd one :  
Yes, he would praise to virtuous anger give,  
And so his vengeance should be nursed and  
live.

‘ Ellis was glad to see his landlord come,  
A transient joy broke in upon his gloom,  
And pleased he led the knight to the superior  
room ;

Where she was wont in happier days to sit,  
Who paid with smiles his condescending wit.

‘ There the sad husband, who had seldom  
been

Where prints acquired in happier days were  
seen,

Now struck by these, and carried to the past,  
A painful look on every object cast :

Sir Owen saw his tenant's troubled state,  
But still he wish'd to know the offenders' fate.

‘ Know you they suffer, Ellis ? ’—Ellis  
knew ;—

“ 'Tis well ! 'tis just ! but have they all their  
due ?

Have they in mind and body, head and heart,  
Sustain'd the pangs of their accursed part ? ”

“ They have ! ”—“ 'Tis well ! ”—“ and wants  
enough to shake

The firmest mind, the stoutest heart to break.”

“ But have you seen them in such misery  
dwell ? ”

“ In misery past description.”—“ That is well.”

“ Alas ! Sir Owen, it perhaps is just,—  
Yet I began my purpose to distrust ;  
For they to justice have discharged a debt,  
That vengeance surely may her claim forget.”

“ Man, can you pity ? ”

“ As a man I feel

Miseries like theirs.”

“ But never would you heal ? ”

“ Hear me, Sir Owen :—I had sought them  
long,

Urged by the pain of ever present wrong,  
Yet had not seen ; and twice the year came  
round—

Years hateful now—ere I my victims found :  
But I did find them, in the dungeon's gloom  
Of a small garret—a precarious home,  
For that depended on the weekly pay,  
And they were sorely frighten'd on the day ;  
But there they linger'd on from week to week,  
Haunted by ills of which 'tis hard to speak,  
For they are many and vexatious all,  
The very smallest—but they none were small.

“ The roof, unceil'd in patches, gave the  
snow

Entrance within, and there were heaps below ;  
I pass'd a narrow region dark and cold,  
The strait of stairs to that infectious hold ;  
And, when I enter'd, misery met my view  
In every shape she wears, in every hue,  
And the bleak icy blast across the dungeon  
flew ;

There frown'd the ruin'd walls that once were  
white ;

There gleam'd the panes that once admitted  
light ;

There lay unsavoury scraps of wretched food ;  
And there a measure, void of fuel, stood ;  
But who shall part by part describe the  
state

Of these, thus follow'd by relentless fate ?

All, too, in winter, when the icy air  
Breathed its black venom on the guilty pair.

“ That man, that Cecil!—he was left, it  
seems,

Unnamed, unnoticed : farewell to his dreams !  
Heirs made by law rejected him of course,  
And left him neither refuge nor resource :—

Their father's ? No : he was the harlot's son  
Who wrong'd them, whom their duty bade  
them shun ;

And they were dutious all, and he was all  
undone.

"Now the lost pair, whom better times  
had led

To part disputing, shared their sorrow's bed :  
Their bed !—I shudder as I speak—and shared  
Scraps to their hunger by the hungry spared."

"Man! my good Ellis! can you sigh?"—

"I can :

In short, Sir Owen, I must feel as man ;  
And could you know the miseries they  
endured,

The poor, uncertain pittance they procured ;  
When, laid aside the needle and the pen,  
Their sickness won the neighbours of their den,  
Poor as they are, and they are passing poor,  
To lend some aid to those who needed more :  
Then, too, an ague with the winter came,  
And in this state—that wife I cannot name  
Brought forth a famish'd child of suffering  
and of shame.

"This had you known, and traced them to  
this scene,

Where all was desolate, defiled, unclean,  
A fireless room, and, where a fire had place,  
The blast loud howling down the empty space,  
You must have felt a part of the distress,  
Forgot your wrongs, and made their suffering  
less !"

"Sought you them, Ellis, from the mean  
intent

To give them succour ?"

"What indeed I meant

At first was vengeance ; but I long pursued  
The pair, and I at last their misery view'd  
In that vile garret, which I cannot paint—  
The sight was loathsome, and the smell was  
faint ;

And there that wife,—whom I had loved so  
well,

And thought so happy, was condemn'd to  
dwell ;

The gay, the grateful wife, whom I was glad  
To see in dress beyond our station clad,  
And to behold among our neighbours fine,  
More than perhaps became a wife of mine ;  
And now among her neighbours to explore,  
And see her poorest of the very poor !—  
I would describe it, but I bore a part,  
Nor can explain the feelings of the heart ;

Yet memory since has aided me to trace  
The horrid features of that dismal place.

"There she reclined unmoved, her bosom  
bare

To her companion's unimpassion'd stare,  
And my wild wonder :—Seat of virtue!  
chaste

As lovely once ! O ! how wert thou dis-  
graced !

Upon that breast, by sordid rags defiled,  
Lay the wan features of a famish'd child ;—  
That sin-born babe in utter misery laid,  
Too feebly wretched even to cry for aid ;  
The ragged sheeting, o'er her person drawn,  
Served for the dress that hunger placed in  
pawn.

"At the bed's feet the man reclined his  
frame :

Their chairs were perish'd to support the  
flame

That warm'd his agued limbs ; and, sad to  
see,

That shook him fiercely as he gazed on me

"I was confused in this unhappy view :  
My wife ! my friend ! I could not think it  
true ;

My children's mother,—my Alicia,—laid  
On such a bed ! so wretched,—so afraid !  
And her gay, young seducer, in the guise  
Of all we dread, abjure, defy, despise,  
And all the fear and terror in his look,  
Still more my mind to its foundation shook.

"At last he spoke :—'Long since I would  
have died,

But could not leave her, though for death  
I sigh'd,

And tried the poison'd cup, and dropt it as  
I tried.

"She is a woman, and that famish'd thing  
Makes her to life, with all its evils, cling :  
Feed her, and let her breathe her last in peace,  
And all my sufferings with your promise  
cease !"

"Ghastly he smiled ;—I knew not what  
I felt,

But my heart melted—hearts of flint would  
melt,

To see their anguish, penury, and shame,  
How base, how low, how grovelling they  
became :

I could not speak my purpose, but my  
eyes

And my expression bade the creature rise.



"Yet, O! that woman's look! my words  
are vain

Her mix'd and troubled feelings to explain;  
True, there was shame and consciousness of  
fall,

But yet remembrance of my love withal,  
And knowledge of that power which she  
would now recal.

"But still the more that she to memory  
brought,

The greater anguish in my mind was wrought;  
The more she tried to bring the past in view,  
She greater horror on the present threw;  
So that, for love or pity, terror thrill'd  
My blood, and vile and odious thoughts  
instill'd.

"This war within, these passions in their  
strife,

If thus protracted, had exhausted life;  
But the strong view of these departed years  
Caused a full burst of salutary tears,  
And as I wept at large, and thought alone,  
I felt my reason re-ascend her throne."

"My friend!" Sir Owen answer'd, "what  
became

Of your just anger?—when you saw their  
shame,

It was your triumph, and you should have  
shown

Strength, if not joy—their sufferings were  
their own."

"Alas, for them! their own in very deed!  
And they of mercy had the greater need;  
Their own by purchase, for their frailty paid,—  
And wanted heaven's own justice human aid?  
And seeing this, could I beseech my God  
For deeper misery, and a heavier rod?"

"But could you help them?"—"Think, Sir  
Owen, how

I saw them then—methinks I see them now!  
She had not food, nor aught a mother needs,  
Who for another life and dearer feeds:  
I saw her speechless; on her wither'd breast  
The wither'd child extended, but not prest,  
Who sought, with moving lip and feeble cry,  
Vain instinct! for the fount without supply.

"Sure it was all a grievous, odious scene,  
Where all was dismal, melancholy, mean,  
Foul with compell'd neglect, unwholesome,  
and unclean;

That arm,—that eye,—the cold, the sunken  
cheek,—

Spoke all, Sir Owen—fiercely miseries speak!

"And you relieved?"

"If hell's seducing crew  
Had seen that sight, they must have pitied  
too."

"Revenge was thine—thou hadst the power,  
the right;

To give it up was heaven's own act to slight."

"Tell me not, sir, of rights, and wrongs, or  
powers!

I felt it written—Vengeance is not ours!"

"Well, Ellis, well!—I find these female foes,  
Or good or ill, will murder our repose;

And we, when Satan tempts them, take the  
cup,

The fruit of their foul sin, and drink it up:  
But shall our pity all our claims remit,

And we the sinners of their guilt acquit?"

"And what, Sir Owen, will our vengeance  
do?"

It follows us when we our foe pursue,  
And, as we strike the blow, it smites the  
smiters too."

"What didst thou, man?"

"I brought them to a cot  
Behind your larches,—a sequester'd spot,  
Where dwells the woman: I believe her mind  
Is now enlighten'd—I am sure resign'd:  
She gave her infant, though with aching heart  
And faltering spirit, to be nursed apart."

"And that vile scoundrel?"—

"Nay, his name restore,  
And call him Cecil,—for he is no more:

When my vain help was offer'd, he was past  
All human aid, and shortly breathed his last;  
But his heart open'd, and he lived to see  
Guilt in himself, and find a friend in me.

"Strange was their parting, parting on the  
day

I offer'd help, and took the man away,  
Sure not to meet again, and not to live  
And taste of joy—He feebly cried, 'Forgive!  
I have thy guilt, thou mine, but now adieu!  
Tempters and tempted! what will thence  
ensue

I know not, dare not think!—He said, and  
he withdrew."

"But, Ellis, tell me, didst thou thus desire  
To heap upon their heads those coals of  
fire?"

"If fire to melt, that feeling is confest,—  
If fire to shame, I let that question rest;  
But if aught more the sacred words imply,  
I know it not—no commentator I."

“Then did you freely from your soul for-  
give?”—

“Sure as I hope before my Judge to live,  
Sure as I trust his mercy to receive,  
Sure as his word I honour and believe,  
Sure as the Saviour died upon the tree  
For all who sin,—for that dear wretch and  
me,—  
Whom never more on earth will I forsake  
or see.”

‘Sir Owen softly to his bed adjourn’d,  
Sir Owen quickly to his home return’d;  
And all the way he meditating dwelt  
On what this man in his affliction felt;  
How he, resenting first, forbore, forgave,  
His passion’s lord, and not his anger’s slave:  
And as he rode he seem’d to fear the deed  
Should not be done, and urged unwonted  
speed.

‘Arrived at home, he scorn’d the change to  
hide,

Nor would indulge a mean and selfish pride,  
That would some little at a time recal  
Th’ avenging vow; he now was frankness all:  
He saw his nephew, and with kindness spoke—  
“Charles, I repent my purpose, and revoke—  
Take her—I’m taught, and would I could  
repay

The generous teacher; hear me, and obey:  
Bring me the dear coquette, and let me vow  
On lips half perjured to be passive now:  
Take her, and let me thank the powers divine  
She was not stolen when her hand was mine,  
Or when her heart—Her smiles I must forget,  
She my revenge, and cancel either debt.”

‘Here ends our tale, for who will doubt the  
bliss

Of ardent lovers in a case like this?

And if Sir Owen’s was not half so strong,  
It may, perchance, continue twice as long.’

## BOOK XIII. DELAY HAS DANGER

Morning excursion—Lady at Silford, who?—  
Reflections on Delay—Cecilia and Henry—  
The Lovers contracted—Visit to the Patron—  
Whom he finds there—Fanny described—  
The yielding of Vanity—Delay—Resentment—  
Want of Resolution—Further Entanglement—  
Danger—How met—Conclusion.

THREE weeks had past, and Richard  
rambles now

Far as the dinners of the day allow;  
He rode to Farley Grange and Finley Mere,  
That house so ancient, and that lake so clear:  
He rode to Ripley through that river gay,  
Where in the shallow streams the loaches play,  
And stony fragments stay the winding stream,  
And gilded pebbles at the bottom gleam,  
Giving their yellow surface to the sun,  
And making proud the waters as they run:  
It is a lovely place, and at the side  
Rises a mountain-rock in rugged pride;  
And in that rock are shapes of shells, and  
forms

Of creatures in old worlds, of nameless worms,  
Whose generations lived and died ere man,  
A worm of other class, to crawl began.

There is a town call’d Silford, where his  
steed

Our traveller rested—He the while would feed  
His mind by walking to and fro, to meet,  
He knew not what adventure, in the street:  
A stranger there, but yet a window-view  
Gave him a face that he conceived he knew:  
He saw a tall, fair, lovely lady, dress’d  
As one whom taste and wealth had jointly  
bless’d;

He gazed, but soon a footman at the door  
Thundering, alarm’d her, who was seen no  
more.

‘This was the lady whom her lover bound  
In solemn contract, and then proved unsound:  
Of this affair I have a clouded view,  
And should be glad to have it clear’d by  
you.’

So Richard spake, and instant George  
replied,

‘I had the story from the injured side,  
But when resentment and regret were gone,  
And pity (shaded by contempt) came on.  
Frail was the hero of my tale, but still  
Was rather drawn by accident than will;  
Some without meaning into guilt advance,  
From want of guard, from vanity, from chance;

Man's weakness flies his more immediate pain,  
A little respite from his fears to gain;  
And takes the part that he would gladly fly,  
If he had strength and courage to deny.

'But now my tale, and let the moral say,  
When hope can sleep, there's danger in delay.  
Not that for rashness, Richard, I would plead,  
For unadvised alliance: No, indeed:  
Think ere the contract—but, contracted, stand  
No more debating, take the ready hand:  
When hearts are willing, and when fears  
subside,

Trust not to time, but let the knot be tied;  
For when a lover has no more to do,  
He thinks in leisure, what shall I pursue?  
And then who knows what objects come in  
view?

For when, assured, the man has nought to  
keep

His wishes warm and active, then they sleep:  
Hopes die with fears; and then a man must  
lose

All the gay visions, and delicious views,  
Once his mind's wealth! He travels at his  
ease,

Nor horrors now nor fairy-beauty sees;  
When the kind goddess gives the wish'd assent,  
No mortal business should the deed prevent;  
But the blest youth should legal sanction seek  
Ere yet th' assenting blush has fled the cheek.

'And—hear me, Richard,—man has reptile-  
pride

That often rises when his fears subside;  
When, like a trader feeling rich, he now  
Neglects his former smile, his humble bow,  
And, conscious of his hoarded wealth, assumes  
New airs, nor thinks how odious he becomes.

'There is a wandering, wavering train of  
thought

That something seeks where nothing should  
be sought,

And will a self-delighted spirit move  
To dare the danger of pernicious love.

'First be it granted all was duly said  
By the fond youth to the believing maid;  
Let us suppose with many a sigh there came  
The declaration of the deathless flame;—  
And so her answer—"She was happy then,  
Blest in herself, and did not think of men;  
And with such comforts in her present state,  
A wish to tempt it was to tempt her fate;

That she would not; but yet she would  
confess

With him she thought her hazard would be  
less;

Nay, more, she would esteem, she would  
regard express:

But to be brief—if he could wait and see  
In a few years what his desires would be."—

'Henry for years read months, then weeks,  
nor found

The lady thought his judgment was unsound;  
"For months read weeks" she read it to his  
praise,

And had some thoughts of changing it to *days*.  
'And here a short excursion let me make,  
A lover tried, I think, for lovers' sake;  
And teach the meaning in a lady's mind

When you can none in her expressions find:  
Words are design'd that meaning to convey,  
But often *Yea* is hidden in a *Nay*!

And what the charmer wills, some gentle  
hints betray.

'Then, too, when ladies mean to yield at  
length,

They match their reasons with the lover's  
strength,

And, kindly cautious, will no force employ  
But such as he can baffle or destroy.

'As when heroic lovers beauty woo'd,  
And were by magic's mighty art withstood,  
The kind historian, for the dame afraid,  
Gave to the faithful knight the stronger aid.

'A downright *No!* would make a man de-  
spair,

Or leave for kinder nymph the cruel fair;  
But '*No!*' because I'm very happy now,  
Because I dread th' irrevocable vow,  
Because I fear papa will not approve,  
Because I love not—No, I cannot love;  
Because you men of Cupid make a jest,  
Because—in short, a single life is best.'

A *No!* when back'd by reasons of such force,  
Invites approach, and will recede of course.

'Ladies, like towns besieged, for honour's  
sake,

Will some defence or its appearance make;  
On first approach there's much resistance  
made,

And conscious weakness hides in bold parade;  
With lofty looks, and threat'nings stern and  
proud,

"Come, if you dare," is said in language  
loud,

But if th' attack be made with care and skill,  
 "Come," says the yielding party, "if you will,"  
 Then each the other's valiant acts approve,  
 And twine their laurels in a wreath of love.—

'We now retrace our tale, and forward go,—  
 Thus Henry rightly read Cecilia's No!  
 His prudent father, who had duly weigh'd,  
 And well approved the fortune of the maid,  
 Not much resisted, just enough to show  
 He knew his power, and would his son should

know.

"Harry, I will, while I your bargain make,  
 That you a journey to our patron take:  
 I know her guardian; care will not become  
 A lad when courting; as you must be dumb,  
 You may be absent; I for you will speak,  
 And ask what you are not supposed to seek."

'Then came the parting hour, and what arise  
 When lovers part! expressive looks and eyes,  
 Tender and tear-full,—many a fond adieu,  
 And many a call the sorrow to renew;  
 Sighs such as lovers only can explain,  
 And words that they might undertake in vain.

'Cecilia liked it not; she had, in truth,  
 No mind to part with her enamour'd youth;  
 But thought it foolish thus themselves to  
 cheat,

And part for nothing but again to meet.

'Now Henry's father was a man whose heart  
 Took with his interest a decided part;  
 He knew his lordship, and was known for acts  
 That I omit,—they were acknowledged facts;  
 An interest somewhere; I the place forget,  
 And the good deed—no matter—'twas a debt:  
 Thither must Henry, and in vain the maid  
 Express'd dissent—the father was obey'd.

'But though the maid was by her fears  
 assail'd,

Her reason rose against them, and prevail'd;  
 Fear saw him hunting, leaping, falling—led,  
 Maim'd and disfigured, groaning to his bed;  
 Saw him in perils, duels,—dying,—dead.  
 But Prudence answer'd, "Is not every maid  
 With equal cause for him she loves afraid?"  
 And from her guarded mind Cecilia threw  
 The groundless terrors that will love pursue.

'She had no doubts, and her reliance strong  
 Upon the honour that she would not wrong:  
 Firm in herself, she doubted not the truth  
 Of him, the chosen, the selected youth;  
 Trust of herself a trust in him supplied,  
 And she believed him faithful, though un-  
 tried:

On her he might depend, in him she would  
 confide.

'If some fond girl express'd a tender pain  
 Lest some fair rival should allure her swain,  
 To such she answer'd, with a look severe,  
 "Can one you doubt be worthy of your fear?"

'My lord was kind,—a month had pass'd  
 away,

And Henry stay'd,—he sometimes named  
 a day;

But still my lord was kind, and Henry still  
 must stay:

His father's words to him were words of fate—  
 "Wait, 'tis your duty; 'tis my pleasure,  
 wait!"

In all his walks, in hilly heath or wood,  
 Cecilia's form the pensive youth pursued;  
 In the gray morning, in the silent noon,  
 In the soft twilight, by the sober moon,  
 In those forsaken rooms, in that immense  
 saloon;

And he, now fond of that seclusion grown,  
 There reads her letters, and there writes his  
 own.

"Here none approach," said he, "to inter-  
 fere,

But I can think of my Cecilia here!"

'But there did come—and how it came to  
 pass

Who shall explain?—a mild and blue-eyed  
 lass;—

It was the work of accident, no doubt—  
 The cause unknown—we say, 'as things fall  
 out; '—

The damsel enter'd there, in wand'ring round  
 about:

At first she saw not Henry; and she ran,  
 As from a ghost, when she beheld a man.

'She was esteem'd a beauty through the hall,  
 And so admitted, with consent of all;  
 And, like a treasure, was her beauty kept  
 From every guest who in the mansion slept  
 Whether as friends who join'd the noble pair,  
 Or those invited by the steward there.

'She was the daughter of a priest, whose life  
 Was brief and sad: he lost a darling wife,  
 And Fanny then her father, who could save  
 But a small portion; but his all he gave,  
 With the fair orphan, to a sister's care,  
 And her good spouse: they were the ruling  
 pair—

Steward and steward's lady—o'er a tribe,  
 Each under each, whom I shall not describe.

'This grave old couple, childless and alone,  
Would, by their care, for Fanny's loss atone:  
She had been taught in schools of honest  
fame;

And to the hall, as to a home, she came,  
My lord assenting: yet, as meet and right,  
Fanny was held from every hero's sight,  
Who might in youthful error cast his eyes  
On one so gentle as a lawful prize,  
On border land, whom, as their right or  
prey,

A youth from either side might bear away.  
Some handsome lover of th' inferior class  
Might as a wife approve the lovely lass;  
Or some invader from the class above,  
Who, more presuming, would his passion prove  
By asking less—love only for his love.

'This much experienced aunt her fear express'd,

And dread of old and young, of host and guest.

'Go not, my Fanny, in their way," she  
cried,

"It is not right that virtue should be tried;  
So, to be safe, be ever at my side."

'She was not ever at that side; but still  
Observed her precepts, and obey'd her will.

'But in the morning's dawn and evening's  
gloom

She could not lock the damsel in her room;  
And Fanny thought, "I will ascend these  
stairs

To see the chapel,—there are none at prayers;  
None," she believed, "had yet to dress re-  
turn'd,

By whom a timid girl might be discern'd:"  
In her slow motion, looking, as she glides,  
On pictures, busts, and what she met besides,  
And speaking softly to herself alone,  
Or singing low in melancholy tone;  
And thus she rambled through the still  
domain,

Room after room, again, and yet again.

'But, to retrace our story, still we say,  
To this saloon the maiden took her way;  
Whereshe beheld our youth, and frighten'd ran,  
And so their friendship in her fear began.

'But dare she thither once again advance,  
And still suppose the man will think it chance?  
Nay, yet again, and what has chance to do  
With this?—I know not: doubtless Fanny  
knew.

'Now, of the meeting of a modest maid  
And sober youth why need we be afraid?

And when a girl's amusements are so few  
As Fanny's were, what would you have  
her do?

Reserved herself, a decent youth to find,  
And just be civil, sociable, and kind,  
And look together at the setting sun,  
Then at each other—What the evil done?

'Then Fanny took my little lord to play,  
And bade him not intrude on Henry's way:  
"O, he intrudes not!" said the youth, and  
grew

Fond of the child, and would amuse him too;  
Would make such faces, and assume such  
looks—

He loved it better than his gayest books.

'When man with man would an acquaint-  
ance seek,

He will his thoughts in chosen language speak;  
And they converse on divers themes, to find  
If they possess a corresponding mind;

But man with woman has foundation laid,  
And built up friendship ere a word is said:  
'Tis not with words that they their wishes tell,  
But with a language answering quite as well;  
And thus they find, when they begin to explore  
Their way by speech, they knew it all before.

'And now it chanced again the pair, when  
dark,

Met in their way, when wandering in the park;  
Not in the common path, for so they might,  
Without a wonder, wander day or night;  
But, when in pathless ways their chance will  
bring

A musing pair, we do admire the thing.

'The youth in meeting read the damsel's  
face,

As if he meant her inmost thoughts to trace;  
On which her colour changed, as if she meant  
To give her aid, and help his kind intent.

'Both smiled and parted, but they did not  
speak—

The smile implied, "Do tell me what you  
seek:"

They took their different ways with erring  
feet,

And met again, surprised that they could  
meet;

Then must they speak—and something of  
the air

Is always ready—" 'Tis extremely fair!"

"It was so pleasant!" Henry said; "the  
beam

Of that sweet light so brilliant on the stream;

And chiefly yonder, where that old cascade  
Has for an age its simple music made;  
All so delightful, soothing, and serene!  
Do you not feel it? not enjoy the scene?  
Something it has that words will not express,  
But rather hide, and make th' enjoyment less:  
'Tis what our souls conceive, 'tis what our  
hearts confess."

'Poor Fanny's heart at these same words  
confess'd

How well he painted, and how rightly guess'd;  
And, while they stood admiring their retreat,  
Henry found something like a mossy seat;  
But Fanny sat not; no, she rather pray'd  
That she might leave him, she was so afraid.

"Not, sir, of you; your goodness I can  
trust,

But folks are so censorious and unjust,  
They make no difference, they pay no regard  
To our true meaning, which is very hard  
And very cruel; great the pain it cost  
To lose such pleasure, but it must be lost:  
Did people know how free from thought of  
ill

One's meaning is, their malice would be still."

'At this she wept; at least a glittering gem  
Shone in each eye, and there was fire in them,  
For as they fell, the sparkles, at his feet,  
He felt emotions very warm and sweet.

"A lovely creature! not more fair than  
good,

By all admired, by some, it seems, pursued,  
Yet self-protected by her virtue's force  
And conscious truth—What evil in discourse  
With one so guarded, who is pleased to trust  
Herself with me, reliance strong and just?"

'Our lover then believed he must not seem  
Cold to the maid who gave him her esteem;  
Not manly this; Cecilia had his heart,  
But it was lawful with his time to part;  
It would be wrong in her to take amiss  
A virtuous friendship for a girl like this;  
False or disloyal he would never prove,  
But kindness here took nothing from his love:  
Soldiers to serve a foreign prince are known,  
When not on present duty to their own;  
So, though our bosom's queen we still prefer,  
We are not always on our knees to her.

"Cecilia present, witness yon fair moon,  
And yon bright orbs, that fate would change  
as soon

As my devotion; but the absent sun  
Cheers us no longer when his course is run;

And then those starry twinklers may obtain  
A little worship till he shines again."

'The father still commanded "Wait awhile,"  
And the son answer'd in submissive style,  
Grieved, but obedient; and obedience teased  
His lady's spirit more than grieving pleased:  
That he should grieve in absence was most fit,  
But not that he to absence should submit;  
And in her letters might be traced reproof,  
Distant indeed, but visible enough;  
This should the wandering of his heart have  
stay'd;

Alas! the wanderer was the vainer made.

'The parties daily met, as by consent,  
And yet it always seem'd by accident;  
Till in the nymph the shepherd had been blind  
If he had fail'd to see a manner kind,  
With that expressive look, that seem'd to say,  
"You do not speak, and yet you see you may."

'O! yes, he saw, and he resolved to fly,  
And blamed his heart, unwilling to comply:  
He sometimes wonder'd how it came to pass,  
That he had all this freedom with the lass;  
Reserved herself, with strict attention kept,  
And care and vigilance that never slept:  
"How is it thus that they a beauty trust  
With me, who feel the confidence is just?  
And they, too, feel it; yes, they may con-  
fide."—

He said in folly, and he smiled in pride.

'Tis thus our secret passions work their way,  
And the poor victims know not they obey.

'Familiar now became the wandering pair,  
And there was pride and joy in Fanny's air;  
For though his silence did not please the maid,  
She judged him only modest and afraid;  
The gentle dames are ever pleased to find  
Their lovers dreading they should prove un-  
kind;

So, blind by hope, and pleased with prospects  
gay,

The generous beauty gave her heart away  
Before he said, "I love!"—alas! he dared  
not say.

'Cecilia yet was mistress of his mind,  
But oft he wished her, like his Fanny, kind;  
Her fondness sooth'd him, for the man was  
vain,

And he perceived that he could give her pain:  
Cecilia liked not to profess her love,  
But Fanny ever was the yielding dove;  
Tender and trusting, waiting for the word,  
And then prepared to hail her bosom's lord.

Cecilia once her honest love avow'd,  
To make him happy, not to make him proud;  
But she would not, for every asking sigh,  
Confess the flame that waked his vanity;  
But this poor maiden, every day and hour,  
Would, by fresh kindness, feed the growing  
power;

And he indulged, vain being! in the joy,  
That he alone could raise it, or destroy;  
A present good, from which he dared not fly,  
Cecilia absent, and his Fanny by.

'O! vain desire of youth, that in the hour  
Of strong temptation, when he feels the power,  
And knows how daily his desires increase,  
Yet will he wait, and sacrifice his peace,  
Will trust to chance to free him from the snare,  
Of which, long since, his conscience said  
beware!

Or look for strange deliverance from that ill,  
That he might fly, could he command the  
will!

How can he freedom from the future seek,  
Who feels already that he grows too weak?  
And thus refuses to resist, till time  
Removes the power, and makes the way for  
crime:

Yet thoughts he had, and he would think,  
"Forego

My dear Cecilia? not for kingdoms! No!  
But may I, ought I not the friend to be  
Of one who feels this fond regard for me?  
I wrong no creature by a kindness lent  
To one so gentle, mild, and innocent;  
And for that fair one, whom I still adore,  
By feeling thus I think of her the more;"

And not unlikely, for our thoughts will tend  
To those whom we are conscious we offend.  
'Had Reason whisper'd, "Has Cecilia leave  
Some gentle youth in friendship to receive,  
And be to him the friend that you appear  
To this soft girl?—would not some jealous  
fear

Proclaim your thoughts, that he approach'd  
too near?"

'But Henry, blinded still, presumed to write  
Of one in whom Cecilia would delight;  
A mild and modest girl, a gentle friend,  
If, as he hoped, her kindness would descend—  
But what he fear'd to lose or hoped to gain  
By writing thus, he had been ask'd in vain.

'It was his purpose, every morn he rose,  
The dangerous friendship he had made to  
close;

It was his torment nightly, ere he slept,  
To feel his prudent purpose was not kept.

'True, he has wonder'd why the timid maid  
Meets him so often, and is not afraid;  
And why that female dragon, fierce and keen,  
Has never in their private walks been seen;  
And often he has thought, "What can their  
silence mean?"

"They can have no design, or plot, or  
plan,—

In fact, I know not how the thing began,—  
'Tis their dependence on my credit here,  
And fear not, nor, in fact, have cause to fear."

'But did that pair, who seem'd to think  
that all

Unwatch'd will wander and unguarded fall,  
Did they permit a youth and maid to meet  
Both unproved? were they so indiscreet?

'This sometimes enter'd Henry's mind, and  
then,

"Who shall account for women or for men?"  
He said, "or who their secret thoughts ex-  
plore?

Why do I vex me? I will think no more."  
My lord of late had said, in manner kind,  
"My good friend Harry, do not think us  
blind!"

Letters had past, though he had nothing seen,  
His careful father and my lord between;  
But to what purpose was to him unknown—  
It might be borough business, or their own.

'Fanny, it seem'd, was now no more in  
dread,

If one approach'd, she neither fear'd nor fled:  
He mused on this,—“But wherefore her  
alarm?

She knows me better, and she dreads no  
harm."

'Something his father wrote that gave him  
pain:

"I know not, son, if you should yet remain;—  
Be cautious, Harry, favours to procure  
We strain a point, but we must first be sure:  
Love is a folly,—that, indeed, is true,—  
But something still is to our honour due,  
So I must leave the thing to my good lord  
and you."

'But from Cecilia came remonstrance strong:  
"You write too darkly, and you stay too  
long;

We hear reports; and, Henry,—mark me  
well,—

I heed not every tale that triflers tell;—

Be you no trifter ; dare not to believe  
That I am one whom words and vows deceive :  
You know your heart, your hazard you will  
learn,

And this your trial — instantly return."

"Unjust, injurious, jealous, cruel maid!  
Am I a slave, of haughty words afraid?  
Can she, who thus commands expect to be  
obey'd?"

O! how unlike this dear assenting soul,  
Whose heart a man might at his will control!"

'Uneasy, anxious, fill'd with self-reproof,  
He now resolved to quit his patron's roof;  
And then again his vacillating mind  
To stay resolved, and that her pride should  
find:

Debating thus, his pen the lover took,  
And chose the words of anger and rebuke.

'Again, yet once again, the conscious pair  
Met, and "O, speak!" was Fanny's silent  
prayer;

And, "I must speak," said the embarrass'd  
youth,

"Must save my honour, must confess the truth:  
Then I must lose her; but, by slow degrees,  
She will regain her peace, and I my ease."

'Ah! foolish man! to virtue true nor vice,  
He buys distress, and self-esteem the price;  
And what his gain? — a tender smile and sigh  
From a fond girl to feed his vanity.

'Thus every day they lived, and every time  
They met, increased his anguish and his crime.

'Still in their meetings they were oft times  
nigh

The darling theme, and then past trembling  
by;

On those occasions Henry often tried  
For the sad truth — and then his heart denied  
The utterance due: thus daily he became  
The prey of weakness, vanity, and shame.

'But soon a day, that was their doubts to  
close,

On the fond maid and thoughtless youth arose.

'Within the park, beside the bounding brook,  
The social pair their usual ramble took;  
And there the steward found them: they  
could trace

News in his looks, and gladness in his face.

'He was a man of riches, bluff and big,  
With clean brown broad-cloth, and with white  
cut wig:

He bore a cane of price, with riband tied,  
And a fat spaniel waddled at his side:

To every being whom he met he gave  
His looks expressive; civil, gay, or grave,  
But condescending all; and each declared  
How much he govern'd, and how well he fared.

'This great man bow'd, not humbly, but  
his bow

Appear'd familiar converse to allow:  
The trembling Fanny, as he came in view,  
Within the chestnut grove in fear withdrew;  
While Henry wonder'd, not without a fear,  
Of that which brought th' important man so  
near:

Doubt was dispersed by — "My esteem'd young  
man!"

As he with condescending grace began —

"Though you with youthful frankness  
nobly trust

Your Fanny's friends, and doubtless think  
them just;

Though you have not, with cravingsoul, applied  
To us, and ask'd the fortune of your bride,  
Be it our care that you shall not lament  
That love has made you so improvident.

"An orphan maid — Your patience! you  
shall have

Your time to speak, I now attention crave; —  
Fanny, dear girl! has in my spouse and me  
Friends of a kind we wish our friends to be,  
None of the poorest — nay, sir, no reply,  
You shall not need — and we are born to die:  
And one yet crawls on earth, of whom, I say,  
That what he has he cannot take away;  
Her mother's father, one who has a store  
Of this world's good, and always looks for  
more;

But, next his money, loves the girl at heart,  
And she will have it when they come to part."

"Sir," said the youth, his terrors all awake,  
"Hear me, I pray, I beg, — for mercy's sake!

Sir, were the secrets of my soul confess'd,  
Would you admit the truths that I protest  
Are such — your pardon" —

"Pardon! good, my friend,  
I not alone will pardon, I commend:

Think you that I have no remembrance left  
Of youthful love, and Cupid's cunning theft?  
How nymphs will listen when their swains  
persuade,

How hearts are gain'd, and how exchange is  
made? —

Come, sir, your hand" —

"In mercy, hear me now!"  
"I cannot hear you, time will not allow:



You know my station, what on me depends,  
For ever needed—but we part as friends;  
And here comes one who will the whole  
explain,

My better self—and we shall meet again.”

“Sir, I entreat”——

“Then be entreaty made

To her, a woman, one you may persuade;  
A little teasing, but she will comply,  
And loves her niece too fondly to deny.”

“O! he is mad, and miserable I!”

Exclaim’d the youth; “But let me now  
collect

My scatter’d thoughts, I something must  
effect.”

‘Hurrying she came—“Now, what has he  
confess’d,

Ere I could come to set your heart at rest?  
What! he has grieved you! Yet he, too,  
approves

The thing! but man will tease you, if he  
loves.

“But now for business: tell me, did you  
think

That we should always at your meetings wink?  
Think you, you walk’d unseen? There are  
who bring

To me all secrets—O, you wicked thing!

“Poor Fanny! now I think I see her blush,  
All red and rosy, when I beat the bush;  
And hide your secret, said I, if you dare!  
So out it came, like an affrighten’d hare.

“Miss! said I gravely; and the trembling  
maid

Pleased me at heart to see her so afraid;  
And then she wept;—now, do remember this;  
Never to chide her when she does amiss;  
For she is tender as the callow bird,  
And cannot bear to have her temper stirr’d;—  
Fanny, I said, then whisper’d her the name,  
And caused such looks—Yes, yours are just  
the same;

But hear my story—When your love was  
known

For this our child—she is, in fact, our own—  
Then, first debating, we agreed at last  
To seek my lord, and tell him what had past.”

“To tell the earl?”

“Yes, truly, and why not?”

And then together we contrived our plot.”

“Eternal God!”

“Nay, be not so surprised,—

In all the matter we were well advised;

We saw my lord, and Lady Jane was there,  
And said to Johnson, “Johnson, take a  
chair:”

True, we are servants in a certain way,  
But in the higher places so are they;  
We are obey’d in ours, and they in theirs  
obey—

So Johnson bow’d, for that was right and fit,  
And had no scruple with the earl to sit—  
Why look you so impatient while I tell  
What they debated?—you must like it well.

“Let them go on,” our gracious earl  
began;

‘They will go off,’ said, joking, my good  
man:

‘Well!’ said the countess,—she’s a lover’s  
friend,—

‘What if they do, they make the speedier  
end’——

But be you more composed, for that dear  
child

Is with her joy and apprehension wild:  
O! we have watch’d you on from day to day,  
‘There go the lovers!’ we were wont to  
say—

But why that look?”——

“Dear madam, I implore

A single moment!”

“I can give no more:

Here are your letters—that’s a female pen,  
Said I to Fanny—‘tis his sister’s, then,’  
Replied the maid.—No! never must you  
stray;

Or hide your wanderings, if you should, I  
pray;

I know, at least I fear, the best may err,  
But keep the by-walks of your life from her:  
That youth should stray is nothing to be told,  
When they have sanction in the grave and old,  
Who have no call to wander and transgress,  
But very love of change and wantonness.

“I prattle idly, while your letters wait,  
And then my lord has much that he would  
state,

All good to you—do clear that clouded face,  
And with good looks your lucky lot embrace.

“Now, mind that none with her divide your  
heart,

For she would die ere lose the smallest part;  
And I rejoice that all has gone so well,  
For who th’ effect of Johnson’s rage can tell?  
He had his fears when you began to meet,  
But I assured him there was no deceit:

He is a man who kindness will requite,  
But injured once, revenge is his delight ;  
And he would spend the best of his estates  
To ruin, goods and body, them he hates ;  
While he is kind enough when he approves  
A deed that's done, and serves the man he  
loves :

Come, read your letters—I must now be gone,  
And think of matters that are coming on."

'Henry was lost,—his brain confused, his  
soul

Dismay'd and sunk, his thoughts beyond  
control ;

Borne on by terror, he foreboding read  
Cecilia's letter ! and his courage fled ;  
All was a gloomy, dark, and dreadful view,  
He felt him guilty, but indignant too :—  
And as he read, he felt the high disdain  
Of injured men—"She may repent in vain."

'Cecilia much had heard, and told him all  
That scandal taught—"A servant at the hall,  
Or servant's daughter, in the kitchen bred,  
Whose father would not with her mother wed,  
Was now his choice ! a blushing fool, the toy,  
Or the attempted, both of man and boy ;  
More than suspected, but without the wit  
Or the allurements for such creatures fit ;  
Not virtuous though unfeeling, cold as ice  
And yet not chaste, the weeping fool of vice ;  
Yielding, not tender ; feeble, not refined ;  
Her form insipid, and without a mind.

"Rival ! she spurn'd the word ; but let  
him stay,

Warn'd as he was ! beyond the present day,  
Whate'er his patron might object to this,  
The uncle-butler, or the weeping miss—  
Let him from this one single day remain,  
And then return ! he would to her, in vain ;  
There let him then abide, to earn, or crave  
Food undeserved ! and be with slaves a slave."

'Had reason guided anger, govern'd zeal,  
Or chosen words to make a lover feel,  
She might have saved him—anger and abuse  
Will but defiance and revenge produce.

"Unjust and cruel, insolent and proud !"

He said, indignant, and he spoke aloud.

"Butler ! and servant ! Gentlest of thy sex,  
Thou wouldst not thus a man who loved thee  
vex ;

Thou wouldst not thus to vile report give ear,  
Nor thus enraged for fancied crimes appear ;  
I know not what, dear maid !—if thy soft  
smiles were here."

And then, that instant, there appear'd the  
maid,

By his sad looks in her reproach dismay'd ;  
Such timid sweetness, and so wrong'd, did  
more

Than all her pleading tenderness before.

'In that weak moment, when disdain and  
pride,

And fear and fondness, drew the man aside,  
In this weak moment—"Wilt thou," he began,  
"Be mine?" and joy o'er all her features ran ;  
"I will!" she softly whisper'd ; but the roar  
Of cannon would not strike his spirit more ;  
Ev'n as his lips the lawless contract seal'd  
He felt that conscience lost her seven-fold  
shield,

And honour fled ; but still he spoke of love,  
And all was joy in the consenting dove.

'That evening all in fond discourse was spent,  
When the sad lover to his chamber went,  
To think on what had past, to grieve and to  
repent :

Early he rose, and look'd with many a sigh  
On the red light that fill'd the eastern sky ;  
Oft had he stood before, alert and gay,  
To hail the glories of the new-born day :  
But now dejected, languid, listless, low,  
He saw the wind upon the water blow,  
And the cold stream curl'd onward as the gale  
From the pine-hill blew harshly down the dale ;  
On the right side the youth a wood survey'd,  
With all its dark intensity of shade ;  
Where the rough wind alone was heard to  
move,

In this, the pause of nature and of love,  
When now the young are rear'd, and when  
the old,

Lost to the tie, grow negligent and cold—  
Far to the left he saw the huts of men,  
Half hid in mist, that hung upon the fen ;  
Before him swallows, gathering for the sea,  
Took their short flights, and twitter'd on the  
lea ;

And near the bean-sheaf stood, the harvest  
done,

And slowly blacken'd in the sickly sun ;  
All these were sad in nature, or they took  
Sadness from him, the likeness of his look,  
And of his mind—he ponder'd for a while,  
Then met his Fanny with a borrow'd smile.

'Not much remain'd ; for money and my  
lord

Soon made the father of the youth accord ;

His prudence half resisted, half obey'd,  
And scorn kept still the guardians of the  
maid :

Cecilia never on the subject spoke,  
She seem'd as one who from a dream awoke ;  
So all was peace, and soon the married pair  
Fix'd with fair fortune in a mansion fair.

' Five years had past, and what was Henry  
then ?

The most repining of repenting men ;  
With a fond, teasing, anxious wife, afraid  
Of all attention to another paid ;  
Yet powerless she her husband to amuse,  
Lives but t' entreat, implore, resent, accuse ;  
Jealous and tender, conscious of defects,  
She merits little, and yet much expects ;  
She looks for love that now she cannot see,  
And sighs for joy that never more can be ;  
On his retirements her complaints intrude,  
And fond reproof endears his solitude :  
While he her weakness (once her kindness)  
sees,

And his affections in her languor freeze ;  
Regret, uncheck'd by hope, devours his mind,  
He feels unhappy, and he grows unkind.

" Fool ! to be taken by a rosy cheek,  
And eyes that cease to sparkle or to speak ;  
Fool ! for this child my freedom to resign,  
When one the glory of her sex was mine ;  
While from this burthen to my soul I hide,  
To think what Fate has dealt, and what denied.

" What fiend possess'd me when I tamely  
gave

My forced assent to be an idiot's slave ?  
Her beauty vanish'd, what for me remains ?  
Th' eternal clicking of the galling chains :  
Her person truly I may think my own,  
Seen without pleasure, without triumph  
shown :

Doleful she sits, her children at her knees,  
And gives up all her feeble powers to please ;  
Whom I, unmoved, or moved with scorn,  
behold,

Melting as ice, as vapid and as cold."

' Such was his fate, and he must yet endure  
The self-contempt that no self-love can cure :  
Some business call'd him to a wealthy town  
When unprepared for more than Fortune's  
frown ;

There at a house he gave his luckless name,  
The master absent, and Cecilia came ;  
Unhappy man ! he could not, dared not  
speak,

But look'd around, as if retreat to seek :  
This she allow'd not ; but, with brow severe,  
Ask'd him his business, sternly bent to hear ;  
He had no courage, but he view'd that face  
As if he sought for sympathy and grace ;  
As if some kind returning thought to trace :  
In vain ; not long he waited, but with air,  
That of all grace compell'd him to despair,  
She rang the bell, and, when a servant came,  
Left the repentant traitor to his shame ;  
But, going, spoke, " Attend this person out,  
And if he speaks, hear what he comes about ! "

Then, with cool curtesy, from the room with-  
drew,

That seem'd to say, " Unhappy man, adieu ! "

' Thus will it be when man permits a vice  
First to invade his heart, and then entice ;  
When wishes vain and undefined arise,  
And that weak heart deceive, seduce, sur-  
prise ;

When evil Fortune works on Folly's side,  
And rash Resentment adds a spur to Pride ;  
Then life's long troubles from those actions  
come,

In which a moment may decide our doom.'

## BOOK XIV. THE NATURAL DEATH OF LOVE

The Rector of the Parish—His Manner of  
teaching—Of living—Richard's Correspondence—The Letters received—Love that  
survives Marriage—That dies in con-  
sequence—That is permitted to die for  
Want of Care—Henry and Emma, a  
Dialogue—Complaints on either Side—And  
Replies—Mutual Accusation—Defence of  
acknowledged Error—Means of restoring  
Happiness—The one to be adopted.

RICHARD one month had with his brother  
been,  
And had his guests, his friends, his favourites  
seen ;  
Had heard the rector, who with decent force,  
But not of action, aided his discourse :  
' A moral teacher ! ' some, contemptuous,  
cried ;  
He smiled, but nothing of the fact denied,

Nor, save by his fair life, 'to charge so strong replied.

Still, though he bade them not on aught rely  
That was their own, but all their worth deny,  
They call'd his pure advice his cold morality ;  
And though he felt that earnestness and zeal,  
That made some portion of his hearers feel,  
Nay, though he loved the minds of men to lead  
To the great points that form the Christian's  
creed,

Still he offended, for he would discuss  
Points that to him seem'd requisite for us ;  
And urge his flock to virtue, though he knew  
The very heathen taught the virtues too :  
Nor was this moral minister afraid  
To ask of inspiration's self the aid  
Of truths by him so sturdily maintain'd,  
That some confusion in the parish reign'd ;  
'Heathens,' they said, 'can tell us right from  
wrong,

But to a Christian higher points belong.'  
Yet Jacques proceeded, void of fear and  
shame,

In his old method, and obtain'd the name  
Of *Moral Preacher*—yet they all agreed,  
Whatever error had defiled his creed,  
His life was pure, and him they could commend,

Not as their guide, indeed, but as their friend :  
Truth, justice, pity, and a love of peace,  
Were his—but there must approbation cease ;  
He either did not, or he would not see,  
That if he meant a favourite priest to be  
He must not show, but learn of them, the way  
To truth—he must not dictate, but obey :  
They wish'd him not to bring them further  
light,

But to convince them that they now were  
right,

And to assert that justice will condemn  
All who presumed to disagree with them :  
In this he fail'd ; and his the greater blame,  
For he persisted, void of fear or shame.

Him Richard heard, and by his friendly aid  
Were pleasant views observed and visits paid ;  
He to peculiar people found his way,  
And had his question answer'd, 'Who are they?'

Twice in the week came letters, and delight  
Beam'd in the eye of Richard at the sight ;  
Letters of love, all full and running o'er,  
The paper fill'd till it could hold no more ;  
Cross'd with discolour'd ink, the doublings full,  
No fear that love should find abundance dull ;

Love reads unsated all that love inspires,  
When most indulged, indulgence still requires ;  
Look what the corners, what the crossings tell,  
And lifts each folding for a fond farewell.

George saw and smiled—'To lovers we  
allow

All this o'erflowing, but a husband thou !  
A father too ; can time create no change ?  
Married, and still so foolish ?—very strange !  
What of this wife or mistress is the art ?—  
'The simple truth, my brother, to impart,  
Her heart, whene'er she writes, feels writing  
to a heart.'

'Fortune, dear Richard, is thy friend—a  
wife

Like thine must soften every care of life,  
And all its woes—I know a pair, whose lives  
Run in the common track of men and wives ;  
And half their worth, at least, this pair would  
give

Could they like thee and thy Matilda live.

'They were, as lovers, of the fondest kind,  
With no defects in manner or in mind ;  
In habit, temper, prudence, they were those  
Whom, as examples, I could once propose ;  
Now this, when married, you no longer trace,  
But discontent and sorrow in the place :  
Their pictures, taken as the pair I saw  
In a late contest, I have tried to draw ;  
'Tis but a sketch, and at my idle time  
I put my couple in the garb of rhyme :  
Thou art a critic of the milder sort,  
And thou wilt judge with favour my report.  
Let me premise, twelve months have flown  
away,

Swiftly or sadly, since the happy day.

'Let us suppose the couple left to spend  
Some hours without engagement or a friend ;  
And be it likewise on our mind impress'd,  
They pass for persons happy and at rest ;  
Their love by Hymen crown'd, and all their  
prospects bless'd.

'Love has slow death and sudden : wretches  
prove

That fate severs—the sudden death of love ;  
It is as if, on day serenely bright,  
Came with its horrors instantaneous night ;  
Others there are with whom love dies away  
In gradual waste and unperceived decay ;  
Such is that death of love that nature finds  
Most fitted for the use of common minds,

The natural death; but doubtless there are some

Who struggle hard, when they perceive it come;  
Loth to be loved no longer, loth to prove  
To the once dear that they no longer love;  
And some with not successful arts will strive  
To keep the weak'ning, fluttering flame alive.  
But see my verse; in this I try to paint  
The passion failing, fading to complaint,  
The gathering grief for joys remember'd yet,  
The vain remonstrance, and the weak regret:  
First speaks the wife in sorrow, she is grieved  
T' admit the truth, and would be still deceived.

#### HENRY AND EMMA.

E. Well, my good sir, I shall contend no more;

But, O! the vows you made, the oaths you swore—

H. To love you always:—I confess it true;  
And do I not? If not, what can I do?  
Moreover think what you yourself profess'd,  
And then the subject may for ever rest.

E. Yes, sir, obedience I profess'd; I know  
My debt, and wish to pay you all I owe,  
Pay without murmur; but that vow was made  
To you, who said it never should be paid;—  
Now truly tell me why you took such care  
To make me err? I ask'd you not to swear,  
But rather hoped you would my mind direct,  
And say, when married, what you would expect.

You may remember—it is not so long  
Since you affirm'd that I could not be wrong;  
I told you then—you recollect, I told  
The very truth—that humour would not hold;  
Not that I thought, or ever could suppose,  
The mighty raptures were so soon to close—  
Poetic flights of love all sunk in sullen prose.

Do you remember how you used to hang  
Upon my looks? your transports when I sang?

I play'd—you melted into tears; I moved—  
Voice, words, and motion, how you all approved;

A time when Emma reign'd, a time when  
Henry loved:

You recollect?

H. Yes, surely; and then why  
The needless truths? do I the facts deny?  
For this remonstrance I can see no need,  
Or this impatience—if you do, proceed.

E. O! that is now so cool, and with a smile

That sharpens insult—I detest the style;  
And, now I talk of styles, with what delight  
You read my lines—I then, it seems, could write:

In short, when I was present you could see  
But one dear object, and you lived for me;  
And now, sir, what your pleasure? Let me dress,

Sing, speak, or write, and you your sense express

Of my poor taste—my words are not correct;  
In all I do is failing or defect—  
Some error you will seek, some blunder will detect;

And what can such dissatisfaction prove?  
I tell you, Henry, you have ceased to love.

H. I own it not; but if a truth it be,  
It is the fault of nature, not of me.  
Remember you, my love, the fairy tale,  
Where the young pairs were spell-bound in the vale?

When all around them gay or glorious seem'd,  
And of bright views and ceaseless joys they dream'd;

Young love and infant life no more could give—

They said but half, when they exclaim'd,  
'We live!'

All was so light, so lovely, so serene,  
And not a trouble to be heard or seen;  
Till, melting into truth, the vision fled,  
And there came miry roads and thorny ways instead.

Such was our fate, my charmer! we were found

A wandering pair, by roguish Cupid bound;  
All that I saw was gifted to inspire  
Grand views of bliss, and wake intense desire  
Of joys that never pall, of flights that never tire;

There was that purple light of love, that bloom,

That ardent passions in their growth assume,  
That pure enjoyment of the soul—O! weak  
Are words such loves and glowing thoughts to speak!

I sought to praise thee, and I felt disdain  
Of my own effort; all attempts were vain.

Nor they alone were charming; by that light

All loved of thee grew lovely in my sight;

Sweet influence not its own in every place  
Was found, and there was found in all things  
grace ;

Thy shrubs and plants were seen new bloom  
to bear,

Not the Arabian sweets so fragrant were,  
Nor Eden's self, if aught with Eden might  
compare.

You went the church-way walk, you  
reach'd the farm,

And gave the grass and babbling springs a  
charm ;

Crop, whom you rode,—sad rider though  
you be,—

Thenceforth was more than Pegasus to me :  
Have I not woo'd your snarling cur to bend  
To me the paw and greeting of a friend ?

And all his surly ugliness forgave,  
Because, like me, he was my Emma's slave ?  
Think you, thus charm'd, I would the spell  
revoke ?

Alas ! my love, we married, and it broke !  
Yet no deceit or falsehood stain'd my breast,  
What I asserted might a saint attest ;  
Fair, dear, and good thou wert, nay, fairest,  
dearest, best :

Nor shame, nor guilt, nor falsehood I avow,  
But 'tis by heaven's own light I see thee  
now ;

And if that light will all those glories chase,  
'Tis not my wish that will the good replace.

E. O ! sir, this boyish tale is mighty well,  
But 'twas your falsehood that destroy'd the  
spell :

Speak not of nature, 'tis an evil mind  
That makes you to accustom'd beauties  
blind ;

You seek the faults yourself, and then com-  
plain you find.

H. I sought them not ; but, madam, 'tis  
in vain

The course of love and nature to restrain ;  
Lo ! when the buds expand the leaves are  
green,

Then the first opening of the flower is seen ;  
Then comes the honied breath and rosy  
smile,

That with their sweets the willing sense  
beguile ;

But, as we look, and love, and taste, and  
praise,

And the fruit grows, the charming flower  
decays ;

Till all is gather'd, and the wintry blast  
Moans o'er the place of love and pleasure  
past.

So 'tis with beauty,—such the opening  
grace

And dawn of glory in the youthful face ;  
Then are the charms unfolded to the sight,  
Then all is loveliness and all delight ;  
The nuptial tie succeeds, the genial hour,  
And, lo ! the falling off of beauty's flower ;  
So, through all nature is the progress made,—  
The bud, the bloom, the fruit,—and then we  
fade.

Then sigh no more,—we might as well  
retain

The year's gay prime as bid that love remain,  
That fond, delusive, happy, transient spell,  
That hides us from a world wherein we dwell,  
And forms and fits us for that fairy ground,  
Where charming dreams and gay conceits  
abound ;

Till comes at length th' awakening strife and  
care,

That we, as tried and toiling men, must share.

E. O ! sir, I must not think that heaven  
approves

Ungrateful man or unrequited loves ;  
Nor that we less are fitted for our parts  
By having tender souls and feeling hearts.

H. Come, my dear friend, and let us not  
refuse

The good we have, by grief for that we lose ;  
But let us both the very truth confess ;

This must relieve the ill, and may redress.

E. O ! much I fear ! I practised no deceit,  
Such as I am I saw you at my feet ;  
If for a goddess you a girl would take,  
'Tis you yourself the disappointment make.

H. And I alone ?—O ! Emma, when I  
pray'd

For grace from thee, transported and afraid,  
Now raised to rapture, now to terror doom'd,  
Was not the goddess by the girl assumed ?  
Did not my Emma use her skill to hide—  
Let us be frank—her weakness and her  
pride ?

Did she not all her sex's arts pursue,  
To bring the angel forward to my view ?  
Was not the rising anger oft suppress'd ?  
Was not the waking passion hush'd to rest ?  
And when so mildly sweet you look'd and  
spoke,

Did not the woman deign to wear a cloak ?

A cloak she wore, or, though not clear my sight,  
I might have seen her—Think you not I might?

*E.* O! this is glorious!—while your passion lives,  
To the loved maid a robe of grace it gives;  
And then, unjust! beholds her with surprise,  
Unrobed, ungracious, when the passion dies.

*H.* For this, my Emma, I to Heaven appeal,

I felt entirely what I seem'd to feel;  
Thou wert all precious in my sight, to me  
The being angels are supposed to be;  
And am I now of my deception told,  
Because I'm doom'd a woman to behold?

*E.* Sir! in few words I would a question ask—

Mean these reproaches that I wore a mask?  
Mean you that I by art or caution tried  
To show a virtue, or a fault to hide?

*H.* I will obey you—When you seem'd to feel

Those books we read, and praised them with such zeal,

Approving all that certain friends approved,  
Was it the pages, or the praise you loved?  
Nay, do not frown—I much rejoiced to find  
Such early judgment in such gentle mind;  
But, since we married, have you deign'd to look

On the grave subjects of one favourite book?  
Or have the once-applauded pages power  
T' engage their warm approver for an hour?

Nay, hear me further—When we view'd that dell,

Where lie those ruins—you must know it well—

When that worn pediment your walk delay'd,

And the stream gushing through the arch decay'd;

When at the venerable pile you stood,  
Till the does ventured on our solitude,  
We were so still! before the growing day  
Call'd us reluctant from our seat away—  
Tell me, was all the feeling you express'd  
The genuine feeling of my Emma's breast?  
Or was it borrow'd, that her faithful slave  
The higher notion of her taste might have?  
So may I judge, for of that lovely scene  
The married Emma has no witness been;

No more beheld that water, falling, flow  
Through the green fern that there delights to grow.

Once more permit me—Well, I know, you feel

For suffering men, and would their sufferings heal,

But when at certain huts you chose to call,  
At certain seasons, was compassion all?

I there beheld thee, to the wretched dear  
As angels to expiring saints appear

When whispering hope—I saw an infant press'd

And hush'd to slumber on my Emma's breast!

Hush'd be each rude suggestion!—Well I know,

With a free hand your bounty you bestow;  
And to these objects frequent comforts send,  
But still they see not now their pitying friend.

A merchant, Emma, when his wealth he states,

Though rich, is faulty if he over-rates  
His real store; and, gaining greater trust

For the deception, should we deem him just?  
If in your singleness of heart you hide

No flaw or frailty, when your truth is tried,  
And time has drawn aside the veil of love,

We may be sorry, but we must approve;  
The fancied charms no more our praise compel,

But doubly shines the worth that stands so well.

*E.* O! precious are you all, and prizes too,  
Or could we take such guilty pains for you?

Believe it not—As long as passion lasts,  
A charm about the chosen maid it casts;

And the poor girl has little more to do  
Than just to keep in sight as you pursue:

Chance to a ruin leads her; you behold,  
And straight the angel of her taste is told;

Chance to a cottage leads you, and you trace  
A virtuous pity in the angel's face;

She reads a work you chance to recommend,  
And likes it well—at least, she likes the friend;

But when it chances this no more is done,  
She has not left one virtue—No! not one!

But be it said, good sir, we use such art,  
Is it not done to hold a fickle heart,

And fix a roving eye?—Is that design  
Shameful or wicked that would keep you mine?

If I confess the art, I would proceed  
To say of such that every maid has need.  
Then when you flatter—in your language—  
praise,

In our own view you must our value raise ;  
And must we not, to this mistaken man,  
Appear as like his picture as we can ?  
If you will call—nay, treat us as divine,  
Must we not something to your thoughts incline ?

If men of sense will worship whom they love,  
Think you the idol will the error prove ?  
What ! show him all her glory is pretence,  
And make an idiot of this man of sense ?

Then, too, suppose we should his praise  
refuse,

And clear his mind, we may our lover lose ;  
In fact, you make us more than nature makes,  
And we, no doubt, consent to your mistakes ;  
You will, we know, until the frenzy cools,  
Enjoy the transient paradise of fools ;  
But fancy fled, you quit the blissful state,  
And truth for ever bars the golden gate.

H. True ! but how ill each other to up-  
braid,

'Tis not our fault that we no longer staid ;  
No sudden fate our lingering love suppress,  
It died an easy death, and calmly sank to  
rest :

To either sex is the delusion lent,  
And when it fails us, we should rest content,  
'Tis cruel to reproach, when bootless to  
repent.

E. Then wise the lovers who consent to  
wait,

And always lingering, never try the state ;  
But hurried on, by what they call their pain  
And I their bliss, no longer they refrain ;  
To ease that pain, to lose that bliss, they run  
To the church magi, and the thing is done ;  
A spell is utter'd, and a ring applied,  
And forth they walk a bridegroom and a  
bride,

To find this counter-charm, this marriage rite,  
Has put their pleasant fallacies to flight !  
But tell me, Henry, should we truly strive,  
May we not bid the happy dream revive ?

H. Alas ! they say when weakness or when  
vice

Expels a foolish pair from Paradise,  
The guardian power to prayer has no regard,  
The knowledge once obtain'd, the gate is  
barr'd ;

Or could we enter we should still repine,  
Unless we could the knowledge too resign.  
Yet let us calmly view our present fate,  
And make a humbler Eden of our state ;  
With this advantage, that what now we gain,  
Experience gives, and prudence will retain.

E. Ah ! much I doubt—when you in fury  
broke

That lovely vase by one impassion'd stroke,  
And thousand china-fragments met my sight,  
Till rising anger put my grief to flight ;  
As well might you the beauteous jar repiece,  
As joy renew and bid vexation cease.

H. Why then 'tis wisdom, Emma, not to  
keep

These griefs in memory ; they had better  
sleep.

There was a time when this heaven-guarded  
isle,

Whose valleys flourish—nay, whose moun-  
tains smile,

Was sterile, wild, deform'd, and beings rude  
Creatures scarce wilder than themselves pur-  
sued ;

The sea was heard around a waste to howl,  
The night-wolf answer'd to the whooting owl,  
And all was wretched—Yet who now surveys  
Theland, withholds his wonder and his praise ?  
Come, let us try and make our moral view  
Improve like this—this have we power to do.

E. O ! I'll be all forgetful, deaf and dumb,  
And all you wish, to have these changes come.

H. And come they may, if not as hereto-  
fore,

We cannot all the lovely vase restore ;  
What we beheld in Love's perspective glass  
Has pass'd away—one sigh ! and let it pass—  
It was a blissful vision, and it fled,  
And we must get some actual good instead :  
Of good and evil that we daily find,  
That we must hoard, *this* banish from the  
mind ;

The food of Love, that food on which he  
thrives,

To find must be the business of our lives ;  
And when we know what Love delights to  
see,

We must his guardians and providers be.

As careful peasants, with incessant toil,  
Bring earth to vines in bare and rocky soil,  
And, as they raise with care each scanty heap,  
Think of the purple clusters they shall  
reap ;



So those accretions to the mind we'll bring,  
Whence fond regard and just esteem will  
spring ;

Then, though we backward look with some  
regret

On those first joys, we shall be happy yet.

Each on the other must in all depend,  
The kind adviser, the unfailing friend ;  
Through the rough world we must each other  
aid,

Leading and led, obeying and obey'd ;

Favour'd and favouring, eager to believe  
What should be truth—unwilling to perceive  
What might offend—determined to remove  
What has offended ; wisely to improve  
What pleases yet, and guard returning love.

Nor doubt, my Emma, but in many an hour  
Fancy, who sleeps, shall wake with all her  
power ;  
And we shall pass—though not perhaps  
remain—

To fairy-land, and feel its charm again.

## BOOK XV. GRETNA GREEN

Richard meets an Acquaintance of his Youth  
—The Kind of Meeting—His School—The  
Doctor Sidmere and his Family—Belwood,  
a Pupil—The Doctor's Opinion of him—  
The Opinion of his Wife—and of his  
Daughter—Consultation—The Lovers—  
Flight to Gretna Green—Return no more—  
The Doctor and his Lady—Belwood and his  
wife—The Doctor reflects—Goes to his Son-  
in-law—His Reception and Return.

'I MET,' said Richard, when return'd to dine,  
'In my excursion, with a friend of mine ;  
Friend! I mistake,—but yet I knew him well,  
Ours was the village where he came to dwell ;  
He was an orphan born to wealth, and then  
Placed in the guardian-care of cautious men ;  
When our good parent, who was kindness all,  
Fed and caress'd him when he chose to call ;  
And this he loved, for he was always one  
For whom some pleasant service must be  
done,

Or he was sullen—He would come and play  
At his own time, and at his pleasure stay ;  
But our kind parent soothed him as a boy  
Without a friend ; she loved he should enjoy  
A day of ease, and strove to give his mind  
employ :

She had but seldom the desired success,  
And therefore parting troubled her the less ;  
Two years he there remain'd, then went his  
way,

I think to school, and him I met to-day.

'I heard his name, or he had past unknown,  
And, without scruple, I divulged my own ;  
His words were civil, but not much express'd,  
"Yes! he had heard I was my brother's  
guest ;"

Then would explain, what was not plain to me,  
Why he could not a social neighbour be.  
He envied you, he said, your quiet life,  
And me a loving and contented wife ;  
You, as unfetter'd by domestic bond,  
Me, as a husband and a father fond :  
I was about to speak, when to the right  
The road then turn'd, and lo ! his house in  
sight.

"Adieu!" he said, nor gave a word or sign  
Of invitation—"Yonder house is mine ;  
Your brother's I prefer, if I might choose—"  
But, my dear sir, you have no time to lose."  
'Say, is he poor ? or has he fits of spleen ?  
Or is he melancholy, moped, or mean ?

So cold, so distant—I bestow'd some  
pains

Upon the fever in my Irish veins.'

'Well, Richard, let your native wrath be  
tamed,

The man has half the evils you have named ;  
He is not poor, indeed, nor is he free  
From all the gloom and care of poverty.'

'But is he married ?'—'Hush! the bell,  
my friend ;

That business done, we will to this attend ;  
And, o'er our wine engaged, and at our ease,  
We may discourse of Belwood's miseries ;  
Not that his sufferings please me—No,  
indeed ;

But I from such am happy to be freed.'

Their speech, of course, to this misfortune  
led,

A weak young man improvidently wed.

'Weak,' answer'd Richard ; 'but we do  
him wrong

To say that his affection was not strong.'

'That we may doubt,' said George; 'in men so weak

You may in vain the strong affections seek;  
They have strong appetites; a fool will eat  
As long as food is to his palate sweet;  
His rule is not what sober nature needs,  
But what the palate covets as he feeds;  
He has the passions, anger, envy, fear,  
As storm is angry, and as frost severe;  
Uncheck'd, he still retains what nature gave,  
And has what creatures of the forest have.

'Weak boys, indulged by parents just as weak,

Will with much force of their affection speak;  
But let mamma th' accustom'd sweets withhold,  
And the fond boys grow insolent and cold.

'Weak men profess to love, and while untried

May woo with warmth, and grieve to be denied;

But this is selfish ardour,—all the zeal  
Of their pursuit is from the wish they feel  
For self-indulgence—When do they deny  
Themselves? and when the favourite object fly?  
Or, for that object's sake, with her requests comply?

'Their sickly love is fed with hopes of joy,  
Repulses damp it, and delays destroy;  
Love, that to virtuous acts will some excite,  
In others but provokes an appetite;  
In better minds, when love possession takes  
And meets with peril, he the reason shakes;  
But these weak natures, when they love profess,

Never regard their small concerns the less.

'That true and genuine love has Quixote-flights

May be allow'd—in vision it delights;  
But in its loftiest flight, its wildest dream,  
Has something in it that commands esteem.  
But this poor love to no such region soars,  
But, Sancho-like, its selfish loss deplores;  
Of its own merit and its service speaks,  
And full reward for all its duty seeks.'

—'When a rich boy, with all the pride of youth,

Weds a poor beauty, will you doubt his truth?  
Such love is tried—it indiscreet may be,  
But must be generous'—

'That I do not see;  
Just at this time the balance of the mind  
Is this or that way by the weights inclined;

In this scale beauty, wealth in that abides,  
In dubious balance, till the last subsides;  
Things are not poised in just the equal state,  
That the ass stands stock-still in the debate;  
Though when deciding he may slowly pass  
And long for both—the nature of the ass;  
'Tis but an impulse that he must obey  
When he resigns one bundle of the hay.'

•

'Take your friend Belwood, whom his guardians sent

To Doctor Sidmere—full of dread he went;  
Doctor they call'd him—he was not of us,  
And where he was—we need not now discuss:  
He kept a school, he had a daughter fair,  
He said, as angels,—say, as women are.

'Clara, this beauty, had a figure light,  
Her face was handsome, and her eyes were bright;

Her voice was music, not by anger raised;  
And sweet her dimple, either pleased or praised;

All round the village was her fame allow'd,  
She was its pride, and not a little proud.

'The ruling thought that sway'd her father's mind

Was this—I am for dignity design'd:  
Riches he rather as a mean approved,  
Yet sought them early, and in seeking loved;  
For this he early made the marriage vow,  
But fail'd to gain—I recollect not how;  
For this his lady had his wrath incur'd,  
But that her feelings seldom could be stirr'd;  
To his fair daughter, famed as well as fair,  
He look'd, and found his consolation there.

'The Doctor taught of youth some half a score,

Well-born and wealthy—He would take no more;

His wife, when peevish, told him, "Yes! and glad"—

It might be so—no more were to be had:  
Belwood, it seems, for college was design'd,  
But for more study he was not inclined:  
He thought of labouring there with much dismay,

And motives mix'd here urged the long delay.

'He now on manhood verged, at least began  
To talk as he supposed became a man.

"Whether he chose the college or the school  
Was his own act, and that should no man rule;

He had his reasons for the step he took,  
Did they suppose he stay'd to read his book?"

'Hopeless, the Doctor said, "This boy is one  
With whom I fear there's nothing to be done."  
His wife replied, who more had guess'd or  
knew,

"You only mean there's nothing he can do;  
Ev'n there you err, unless you mean indeed  
That the poor lad can neither think nor read."

—"What credit can I by such dunce  
obtain?"—

"Credit? I know not—you may something  
gain;

'Tis true he has no passion for his books,  
But none can closer study Clara's looks;  
And who controls him? now his father's  
gone,

There's not a creature cares about the son.  
If he be brought to ask your daughter's hand,  
All that he has will be at her command;  
And who is she? and whom does she obey?  
Where is the wrong, and what the danger,  
pray?

Becoming guide to one who guidance needs  
Is merit surely—If the thing succeeds,  
Cannot you always keep him at your side,  
And be his honour'd guardian and his guide?  
And cannot I my pretty Clara rule?  
Is not this better than a noisy school?"

'The Doctor thought and mused, he felt and  
feard,

Wish'd it to be—then wish'd he had not  
heard;

But he was angry—that at least was right,  
And gave him credit in his lady's sight;—  
Then, milder grown, yet something still  
severe,

He said, "Consider, Madam, think and fear;"  
But, ere they parted, softening to a smile,  
'Farewell!' said he—"I'll think myself  
awhile."

'James and his Clara had, with many a pause  
And many a doubt, infringed the Doctor's  
laws;

At first with terror, and with eyes turn'd  
round

On every side for fear they should be found;  
In the long passage, and without the gate,  
They met, and talk'd of love and his estate;  
Sweet little notes, and full of hope, were laid  
Where they were found by the attentive maid;  
And these she answer'd kindly as she could,  
But still "I dare not" waited on "I would;"

Her fears and wishes she in part confess'd,  
Her thoughts and views she carefully sup-  
press'd;

Her Jemmy said at length, "He did not heed  
His guardian's anger—What was he, indeed?  
A tradesman once, and had his fortune gain'd  
In that low way,—such anger he disdain'd—  
He loved her pretty looks, her eyes of blue,  
Her auburn-braid, and lips that shone like  
dew;

And did she think her Jemmy stay'd at school  
To study Greek?—What, take him for a fool?  
Not he, by Jove! for what he had to seek  
He would in English ask her, not in Greek;  
Will you be mine? are all your scruples gone?  
Then let's be off—I've that will take us on."  
'Twas true; the clerk of an attorney there  
Had found a Jew,—the Jew supplied the heir.

'Yet had he fears—"My guardian's may  
condemn

The choice I make—but what is that to  
them?

The more they strive my pleasure to restrain,  
The less they'll find they're likely to obtain;  
For when they work one to a proper cue,  
What they forbid one takes delight to do."

'Clara exulted—now the day would come  
Belwood must take her in her carriage home;  
"Then I shall hear what Envy will remark  
When I shall sport the ponies in the park;  
When my friend Jane will meet me at the ball,  
And see me taken out the first of all;  
I see her looks when she beholds the men  
All crowd about me—she will simper then,  
And cry with her affected air and voice,  
'O! my sweet Clara, how do I rejoice  
At your good fortune!'—"Thank you, dear,'  
say I;

'But some there are that could for envy  
die.'"

'Mamma look'd on with thoughts to these  
allied,

She felt the pleasure of reflected pride;  
She should respect in Clara's honour find—  
But she to Clara's secret thoughts was blind;  
O! when we thus design we do but spread  
Nets for our feet, and to our toils are led:  
Those whom we think we rule their views  
attain,

And we partake the guilt without the gain.

'The Doctor long had thought, till he be-  
came

A victim both to avarice and shame;

From his importance, every eye was placed  
On her designs—How dreadful if disgraced!

“O! that unknown to him the pair had  
flown

To that same Green, the project all their own!  
And should they now be guilty of the act,  
Am not I free from knowledge of the fact?  
Will they not, if they will?”—’Tis thus we  
meet

The check of conscience, and our guide defeat.

‘This friend, this spy, this counsellor at rest,  
More pleasing views were to the mind address’d.

‘The mischief done, he would be much dis-  
pleased,

For weeks, nay, months, and slowly be  
appeased;—

Yet of this anger if they felt the dread,  
Perhaps they dare not steal away to wed;  
And if on hints of mercy they should go,  
He stood committed—it must not be so.

‘In this dilemma either horn was hard,—  
Best to seem careless, then, and off one’s  
guard;

And, lest their terror should their flight  
prevent,

His wife might argue—fathers will relent  
On such occasions—and that she should share  
The guilt and censure was her proper care.

“Suppose them wed,” said he, “and at my  
feet,

I must exclaim that instant—Vile deceit!  
Then will my daughter, weeping, while they  
kneel,

For its own Clara beg my heart may feel:

At last, but slowly, I may all forgive,  
And their adviser and director live.”

‘When wishes only weak the heart surprise,  
Heaven, in its mercy, the fond prayer denies;  
But when our wishes are both base and weak,  
Heaven, in its justice, gives us what we  
seek.

‘All pass’d that was expected, all prepared  
To share the comfort—What the comfort  
shared?

‘The married pair, on their return, agreed  
That they from school were now completely  
freed;

Were man and wife, and to their mansion now  
Should boldly drive, and their intents avow:  
The acting guardian in the mansion reign’d,  
And, thither driving, they their will explain’d:  
The man awhile discoursed in language high,  
The ward was sullen, and made brief reply;

Till, when he saw th’ opposing strength  
decline,

He bravely utter’d—“Sir, the house is mine!”  
And, like a lion, lash’d by self-rebuke,  
His own defence he bravely undertook.

“Well! be it right or wrong, the thing is  
past;

You cannot hinder what is tight and fast:  
The church has tied us; we are hither come  
To our own place, and you must make us  
room.”

‘The man reflected—“You deserve, I know,  
Foolish young man! what fortune will  
bestow:

No punishment from me your actions need,  
Whose pains will shortly to your faults succeed.”

‘James was quite angry, wondering what  
was meant

By such expressions—Why should he repent?

‘New trial came—The wife conceived it right  
To see her parents; “So,” he said, “she might,  
If she had any fancy for a jail,  
But upon him no creature should prevail;  
No! he would never be again the fool  
To go and starve, or study at a school!”

“O! but to see her parents!”—“Well!  
the sight

Might give her pleasure—very like it might,  
And she might go; but to his house restored  
He would not now be catechised and bored.”

It was her duty;—“Well!” said he again,  
“There you may go—and there you may  
remain!”

Already this?—Even so: he heard it said  
How rash and heedless was the part he play’d;  
For love of money in his spirit dwelt,

And there repentance was intensely felt:

His guardian told him he had bought a toy  
At tenfold price, and bargain’d like a boy:  
Angry at truth, and wrought to fierce disdain,  
He swore his loss should be no woman’s gain;  
His table she might share, his name she must,  
But if aught more—she gets it upon trust.

For a few weeks his pride her face dis-  
play’d—

He then began to thwart her, and upbraid;  
He grew imperious, insolent, and loud—

His blinded weakness made his folly proud;  
He would be master,—she had no pretence

To counsel him, as if he wanted sense;  
He must inform her, she already cost

More than her worth, and more should not  
be lost;

But still concluding, "if your will be so  
That you must see the old ones, do it—go!"

'Some weeks the doctor waited, and the  
while

His lady preach'd in no consoling style:  
At last she fear'd that rustic had convey'd  
Their child to prison—yes, she was afraid,—  
There to remain in that old hall alone  
With the vile heads of stags, and floors of  
stone.

"Why did you, sir, who know such things  
so well,

And teach us good, permit them to rebel?  
Had you o'erawed and check'd them when  
in sight,

They would not then have ventured upon  
flight—

Had you?"—"Out, serpent! did not you  
begin?

What! introduce, and then upbraid the sin?  
For sin it is, as I too well perceive:

But leave me, woman, to reflection leave;  
Then to your closet fly, and on your knees  
Beg for forgiveness for such sins as these."

"A moody morning!" with a careless air  
Replied the wife—"Why counsel me to  
prayer?

I think the lord and teacher of a school  
Should pray himself, and keep his temper  
cool."

'Calm grew the husband when the wife was  
gone—

"The game," said he, "is never lost till won:  
'Tis true, the rebels fly their proper home,  
They come not nigh, because they fear to come;  
And for my purpose fear will doubtless prove  
Of more importance and effect than love;—  
Suppose me there—suppose the carriage stops,  
Down on her knees my trembling daughter  
drops;

Slowly I raise her; in my arms to fall,  
And call for mercy as she used to call;  
And shall that boy, who dreaded to appear  
Before me, cast away at once his fear?

'Tis not in nature! He who once would cower  
Beneath my frown, and sob for half an hour;  
He who would kneel with motion prompt and  
quick

If I but look'd—as dogs that do a trick;  
He still his knee-joints flexible must feel,  
And have a slavish promptitude to kneel;—  
Soon as he sees me he will drop his lip,  
And bend like one made ready for the whip:

O! come, I trifle, let me haste away—  
What! throw it up, when I have cards to  
play?"

'The Doctor went, a self-invited guest;  
He met his pupil, and his frown repress'd,  
For in those lowering looks he could discern  
Resistance sullen and defiance stern;  
Yet was it painful to put off his style  
Of awful distance, and assume a smile:  
So between these, the gracious and the grand,  
Succeeded nothing that the Doctor plann'd.

'The sullen youth, with some reviving dread,  
Bow'd and then hang'd disconsolate his head;  
And, muttering welcome in a muffled tone,  
Stalk'd cross the park to meditate alone,  
Saying, or rather seeming to have said,  
"Go! seek your daughter, and be there  
obey'd."

'He went—The daughter her distresses told,  
But found her father to her interests cold;  
He kindness and complacency advised;  
She answer'd, "these were sure to be despised;  
That of the love her husband once possess'd  
Not the least spark was living in his breast;  
The boy repented, and grew savage soon;  
There never shone for her a honey-moon.  
Soon as he came, his cares all fix'd on one,  
Himself, and all his passion was a gun;  
And though he shot as he did all beside,  
It still remain'd his only joy and pride:  
He left her there,—she knew not where he  
went,—

But knew full well he should the slight repent;  
She was not one his daily taunts to bear,  
He made the house a hell that he should share;  
For, till he gave her power herself to please,  
Never for him should be a moment's ease."

"He loves you, child!" the softening  
father cried:

—"He loves himself, and not a soul beside:  
Loves me!—why, yes, and so he did the pears  
You caught him stealing—would he had the  
fears!

Would you could make him tremble for his life,  
And then to you return the stolen wife,  
Richly endow'd—but, O! the idiot knows  
The worth of every penny he bestows.

"Were he but fool alone, I'd find a way  
To govern him, at least to have my day;  
Or were he only brute, I'd watch the hour,  
And make the brute-affection yield me power;  
But silly both and savage—O! my heart!  
It is too great a trial!—we must part."

“Oblige the savage by some act!”—“The debt,

You find, the fool will instantly forget;  
Oblige the fool with kindness or with praise,  
And you the passions of the savage raise.”

“Time will do much.”—“Can time my name restore?”

“Have patience, child.”—“I am a child no more,

Nor more dependent; but, at woman’s age,  
I feel that wrongs provoke me and enrage:  
Sir, could you bring me comfort, I were cool;  
But keep your counsel for your boys at school.”

‘The Doctor then departed—Why remain  
To hear complaints, who could himself complain,

Who felt his actions wrong, and knew his efforts vain?

‘The sullen youth, contending with his fate,  
Began the darling of his heart to hate;  
Her pretty looks, her auburn braid, her face,  
All now remain’d the proofs of his disgrace;  
While, more than hateful in his vixen’s eyes,  
He saw her comforts from his griefs arise;  
Who felt a joy she strove not to conceal,  
When their expenses made her miser feel.

‘War was perpetual: on a first attack  
She gain’d advantage, he would turn his back;  
And when her small-shot whistled in his ears,  
He felt a portion of his early fears;  
But if he turn’d him in the battle’s heat,  
And fought in earnest, hers was then defeat;  
His strength of oath and curse brought little harm,

But there was no resisting strength of arm.

‘Yet wearied both with war, and vex’d at heart,

The slaves of passion judged it best to part:  
Long they debated, nor could fix a rate  
For a man’s peace with his contending mate;  
But mutual hatred, scorn, and fear, assign’d  
That price—that peace it was not theirs to find.

‘The watchful husband lived in constant hope

To hear the wife had ventured to elope;  
But though not virtuous, nor in much discredit,

He found her coldness would such views defeat;

And thus, by self-reproof and avarice scourged,  
He wore the galling chains his folly forged.

‘The wife her pleasures, few and humble, sought,

And with anticipated stipend bought;  
Without a home, at fashion’s call she fled  
To an hired lodging and a widow’d bed;  
Husband and parents banish’d from her mind,  
She seeks for pleasures that she cannot find;  
And grieves that so much treachery was employ’d

To gain a man who has her peace destroy’d.

‘Yet more the grieving father feels distress,  
His error greater, and his motives less;  
He finds too late, by stooping to deceit,  
It is ourselves and not the world we cheat;  
For, though we blind it, yet we can but feel  
That we have something evil to conceal;  
Nor can we by our utmost care be sure  
That we can hide the sufferings we endure.’

## BOOK XVI. LADY BARBARA; OR, THE GHOST

Introductory Discourse—For what purpose would a Ghost appear?—How the Purpose would be answered—The Fact admitted, would not Doubts return?—Family Stories of Apparitions—Story of Lady Barbara—Her Widowhood—Resides with a Priest—His family—A favourite Boy—His Education—His Fondness for the Lady—It becomes Love—His Reflections—His Declaration—Her Reply—Her Relation—Why she must not marry a second Time—How warned—Tokens of the Appearance—The Lover argues with the Lady—His Success—The Consequences of it.

THE Brothers spoke of Ghosts,—a favourite theme

With those who love to reason or to dream;  
And they, as greater men were wont to do,  
Felt strong desire to think the stories true;  
Stories of spirits freed, who came to prove  
To spirits bound in flesh that yet they love,  
To give them notice of the things below,  
Which we must wonder how they came to know,

Or known, would think of coming to relate  
To creatures who are tried by unknown fate.

'Warning,' said Richard, 'seems the only thing

That would a spirit on an errand bring;  
To turn a guilty mind from wrong to right.  
A ghost might come, at least I think it might.'

'But,' said the Brother, 'if we here are tried,

A spirit sent would put that law aside;  
It gives to some advantage others need,  
Or hurts the sinner should it not succeed:  
If from the dead, said Dives, one were sent  
To warn my brethren, sure they would repent;  
But Abraham answer'd, if they now reject  
The guides they have, no more would that effect;

Their doubts too obstinate for grace would prove,

For wonder hardens hearts it fails to move.

'Suppose a sinner in an hour of gloom,  
And let a ghost with all its horrors come;  
From lips unmoved let solemn accents flow,  
Solemn his gesture be, his motion slow;  
Let the warped hand and threatening look impart

Truth to the mind and terror to the heart;  
And, when the form is fading to the view,  
Let the convicted man cry, "this is true!"

'Alas! how soon would doubts again invade

The willing mind, and sins again persuade!  
I saw it—What?—I was awake, but how?  
Not as I am, or I should see it now:

It spoke, I think,—I thought, at least, it spoke,—

And look'd alarming—yes, I felt the look.

'But then in sleep those horrid forms arise,  
That the soul sees,—and we suppose, the eyes,—

And the soul hears,—the senses then thrown by,

She is herself the ear, herself the eye;  
A mistress so will free her servile race  
For their own tasks, and take herself the place:

In sleep what forms will ductile fancy take,  
And what so common as to dream awake?  
On others thus do ghostly guests intrude?  
Or why am I by such advice pursued?  
One out of millions who exist, and why  
They know not—cannot know—and such am I;

And shall two beings of two worlds, to meet,  
The laws of one, perhaps of both, defeat?

It cannot be—But if some being lives  
Who such kind warning to a favourite gives,  
Let them these doubts from my dull spirit clear,

And once again, expected guest! appear.

'And if a second time the power complied,  
Why is a third, and why a fourth denied?  
Why not a warning ghost for ever at our side?  
Ah, foolish being! thou hast truth enough,  
Augmented guilt would rise on greater proof;  
Blind and imperious passion disbelieves,  
Or madly scorns the warning it receives,  
Or looks for pardon ere the ill be done,  
Because 'tis vain to strive our fate to shun;  
In spite of ghosts, predestined woes would come,

And warning add new terrors to our doom.

'Yet there are tales that would remove our doubt,

The whisper'd tales that circulate about,  
That in some noble mansion take their rise,  
And told with secrecy and awe, surprise:  
It seems not likely people should advance,  
For falsehood's sake, such train of circumstance;

Then the ghosts bear them with a ghost-like grace,

That suits the person, character, and place.

'But let us something of the kind recite:  
What think you, now, of Lady Barbara's spright?'

'I know not what to think; but I have heard

A ghost, to warn her or advise, appear'd;  
And that she sought a friend before she died  
To whom she might the awful fact confide,  
Who seal'd and secret should the story keep  
Till Lady Barbara slept her final sleep,  
In that close bed, that never spirit shakes,  
Nor ghostly visitor the sleeper wakes.'

'Yes, I can give that story, not so well  
As your old woman would the legend tell,  
But as the facts are stated; and now hear  
How ghosts advise, and widows persevere.'

'When her lord died, who had so kind a heart,

That any woman would have grieved to part,  
It had such influence on his widow's mind,  
That she the pleasures of the world resign'd,  
Young as she was, and from the busy town  
Came to the quiet of a village down;

Not as insensible to joys, but still  
With a subdued but half-rebellious will;  
For she had passions warm, and feeling strong,  
With a right mind, that dreaded to be  
wrong;—

Yet she had wealth to tie her to the place  
Where it procures delight and veils dis-  
grace;

Yes she had beauty to engage the eye,  
A widow still in her minority;  
Yet she had merit worthy men to gain,  
And yet her hand no merit could obtain;  
For, though secluded, there were trials made,  
When he who soften'd most could not per-  
suade;

Awile she hearken'd as her swain proposed,  
And then his suit with strong refusal closed.

“Thanks, and farewell!—give credit to my  
word,

That I shall die the widow of my lord;

’Tis my own will, I now prefer the state,—  
If mine should change, it is the will of fate.”

‘Such things were spoken, and the hearers  
cried,

“ ’Tis very strange,—perhaps she may be  
tried.”

‘The lady past her time in taking air,  
In working, reading, charities, and prayer;  
In the last duties she received the aid  
Of an old friend, a priest, with whom she  
pray’d;

And to his mansion with a purpose went,  
That there should life be innocently spent;  
Yet no cold vot’ress of the cloister she,  
Warm her devotion, warm her charity;  
The face the index of a feeling mind,  
And her whole conduct rational and kind.

‘Though rich and noble, she was pleased  
to slide

Into the habits of her reverend guide,  
And so attended to his girls and boys,  
She seem’d a mother in her fears and joys;  
On her they look’d with fondness, something  
check’d

By her appearance, that engaged respect;  
For still she dress’d as one of higher race,  
And her sweet smiles had dignity and grace.

George was her favourite, and it gave her  
joy

To indulge and to instruct the darling boy;  
To watch, to soothe, to check the forward  
child,

Who was at once affectionate and wild;

Happy and grateful for her tender care,  
And pleased her thoughts and company to  
share.

‘George was a boy with spirit strong and  
high,

With handsome face, and penetrating eye;  
O’er his broad forehead hung his locks of  
brown,

That gave a spirit to his boyish frown;  
“My little man,” were words that she applied  
To him, and he received with growing pride;  
Her darling, even from his infant years,  
Had something touching in his smiles and  
tears;

And in his boyish manners he began  
To show the pride that was not made for man;  
But it became the child, the mother cried,  
And the kind lady said it was not pride.

‘George, to his cost, though sometimes to  
his praise,

Was quite a hero in these early days,  
And would return from heroes just as stout,  
Blood in his crimson cheek, and blood without.

“What! he submit to vulgar boys and low,  
He bear an insult, he forget a blow!  
They call’d him Parson—let his father bear  
His own reproach, it was his proper care;  
He was no parson, but he still would teach  
The boys their manners, and yet would not  
preach.”

‘The father, thoughtful of the time foregone,  
Was loth to damp the spirit of his son;  
Rememb’ring he himself had early laurels  
won;

The mother, frighten’d, begg’d him to refrain,  
And not his credit or his linen stain:  
While the kind friend so gently blamed the  
deed,

He smiled in tears, and wish’d her to proceed;  
For the boy pleased her, and that roguish eye  
And daring look were cause of many a sigh,  
When she had thought how much would such  
quick temper try:

And oft she felt a kind of gathering gloom,  
Sad, and prophetic of the ills to come.

‘Years fled unmark’d; the lady taught no  
more

Th’ adopted tribe, as she was wont before;  
But by her help the school the lasses sought,  
And by the vicar’s self the boy was taught;  
Not unresisting when that cursed Greek  
Ask’d so much time for words that none will  
speak.



“What can men worse for mortal brain  
contrive

Than thus a hard dead language to revive!  
Heav’n’s, if a language once be fairly dead,  
Let it be buried, not preserved and read,  
The bane of every boy to decent station bred.  
If any good these crabbed books contain,  
Translate them well, and let them then  
remain;

To one huge vault convey the useless store,  
Then lose the key, and never find it more.”

“Something like this the lively boy express’d,  
When Homer was his torment and his jest.

“George,” said the father, “can at pleasure  
seize

The point he wishes, and with too much ease;  
And hence, depending on his powers and vain,  
He wastes the time that he will sigh to gain.”

“The partial widow thought the wasted days  
He would recover, urged by love and praise;  
And thus absolved, the boy, with grateful  
mind,

Repaid a love so useful and so blind;  
Her angry words he loved, although he fear’d,  
And words not angry doubly kind appear’d.

“George, then on manhood verging, felt the  
charms

Of war, and kindled at the world’s alarms;  
Yet war was then, though spreading wide  
and far,

A state of peace to what has since been war:  
’Twas then some dubious claim at sea or land,  
That placed a weapon in a warrior’s hand;  
But in these times the causes of our strife  
Are hearth and altar, liberty and life.

“George, when from college he return’d, and  
heard

His father’s questions, cold and shy appear’d.

“Who had the honours?”—“Honour!”  
said the youth,

“Honour at college!—very good, in truth!”

“What hours to study did he give?”—He  
gave

Enough to feel they made him like a slave—  
And the good vicar found if George should rise,  
It would not be by college exercise.

“At least the time for your degree abide,  
And be ordain’d,” the man of peace replied;  
“Then you may come and aid me while I keep,  
And watch, and shear the hereditary sheep;  
Choose then your spouse.”—That heard the  
youth, and sigh’d,

Nor to aught else attended or replied.

George had of late indulged unusual fears  
And dangerous hopes: he wept unconscious  
tears;—

Whether for camp or college, well he knew  
He must at present bid his friends adieu;  
His father, mother, sisters,—could he part  
With these, and feel no sorrow at his heart?  
But from that lovely lady could he go?  
That fonder, fairer, dearer mother?—No!  
For while his father spoke, he fix’d his eyes  
On that dear face, and felt a warmth arise,  
A trembling flush of joy, that he could ill  
disguise—

Then ask’d himself from whence this growing  
bliss,

This new-found joy, and all that waits on this?  
Why sinks that voice so sweetly in mine ear?  
What makes it now a livelier joy to hear?  
Why gives that touch—Still, still do I retain  
The fierce delight that tingled through each  
vein—

Why at her presence with such quickness flows  
The vital current?—Well a lover knows.

“O! tell me not of years,—can she be old?  
Those eyes, those lips, can man unmoved  
behold?

Has time that bosom chill’d? are cheeks so  
rosy cold?

No, she is young, or I her love t’ engage  
Will grow discreet, and that will seem like age:  
But speak it not; Death’s equalizing arm  
Levels not surer than Love’s stronger charm,  
That bids all inequalities be gone,  
That laughs at rank, that mocks comparison.

There is not young or old, if Love decrees,  
He levels orders, he confounds degrees;  
There is not fair, or dark, or short, or tall,  
Or grave, or sprightly—Love reduces all;  
From each abundant good a portion takes,  
And for each want a compensation makes;  
Then tell me not of years—Love, power  
divine,  
Takes, as he wills, from hers, and gives to  
mine.

And she, in truth, was lovely—Time had  
strewn

No snows on her, though he so long had flown;  
The purest damask blossom’d in her cheek,  
The eyes said all that eyes are wont to speak;  
Her pleasing person she with care adorn’d,  
Nor arts that stay the flying graces scorn’d;  
Nor held it wrong these graces to renew,  
Or give the fading rose its opening hue:

Yet few there were who needed less the art  
To hide an error, or a grace impart.

‘George, yet a child, her faultless form admired,

And call’d his fondness love, as truth required;  
But now, when conscious of the secret flame,  
His bosom’s pain, he dared not give the name:  
In her the mother’s milder passion grew,  
Tender she was, but she was placid too;  
From him the mild and filial love was gone,  
And a strong passion came in triumph on.

“Will she,” he cried, “this impious love allow?

And, once my mother, be my mistress now?  
The parent-spouse? how far the thought from her,

And how can I the daring wish aver?  
When first I speak it, how will those dear eyes  
Gleam with awaken’d horror and surprise;  
Will she not, angry and indignant, fly  
From my imploring call, and bid me die?  
Will she not shudder at the thought, and say,  
My son! and lift her eyes to heaven and pray?  
Alas! I fear—and yet my soul she won  
While she with fond endearments call’d me son!  
Then first I felt—yet knew that I was wrong—  
This hope, at once so guilty and so strong:  
She gave—I feel it now—a mother’s kiss,  
And quickly fancy took a bolder bliss;  
But hid the burning blush, for fear that eye  
Should see the transport, and the bliss deny:  
O! when she knows the purpose I conceal,  
When my fond wishes to her bosom steal,  
How will the angel fear? How will the  
woman feel?

“And yet perhaps this instant, while I speak,  
She knows the pain I feel, the cure I seek;  
Better than I she may my feelings know,  
And nurse the passion that she dares not show:  
She reads the look,—and sure my eyes have  
shown

To her the power and triumph of her own,—  
And in maternal love she veils the flame  
That she will heal with joy, yet hear with  
shame.

“Come, let me then—no more a son—reveal  
The daring hope, and for her favour kneel;  
Let me in ardent speech my meanings dress,  
And, while I mourn the fault, my love confess;  
And, once confess’d, no more that hope resign,  
For she or misery henceforth must be mine.

“O! what confusion shall I see advance  
On that dear face, responsive to my glance!

Sure she can love!”

In fact, the youth was right;  
She could, but love was dreadful in her sight;  
Love like a spectre in her view appear’d,  
The nearer he approach’d the more she fear’d.

‘But knew she, then, this dreaded love?

She guess’d

That he had guilt—she knew he had not rest:  
She saw a fear that she could ill define,  
And nameless terrors in his looks combine:  
It is a state that cannot long endure,  
And yet both parties dreaded to be sure.

‘All views were past of priesthood and a  
gown,

George, fix’d on glory, now prepared for town;  
But first his mighty hazard must be run,  
And more than glory either lost or won:  
Yet, what was glory? Could he win that heart  
And gain that hand, what cause was there to  
part?

Her love afforded all that life affords—  
Honour and fame were phantasies and words!

‘But he must see her—She alone was seen  
In the still evening of a day serene:

In the deep shade beyond the garden walk  
They met, and talking, ceased and fear’d to  
talk;

At length she spoke of parent’s love,—and  
now

He hazards all—“No parent, lady, thou  
None, none to me! but looks so fond and  
mild

Would well become the parent of my child.”

‘She gasp’d for breath—then sat as one  
resolved

On some high act, and then the means  
revolved.

“It cannot be, my George, my child, my  
son!

The thought is misery!—Guilt and misery  
shun:

Far from us both be such design, O, far!

Let it not pain us at the awful bar,  
Where souls are tried, where known the  
mother’s part

That I sustain, and all of either heart.

“To wed with thee I must all shame efface,  
And part with female dignity and grace:

Was I not told, by one who knew so well

This rebel heart, that it must not rebel?

Were I not warn’d, yet Reason’s voice would  
cry,

‘Retreat, resolve, and from the danger fly!’

If Reason spoke not, yet would woman's pride  
A woman's will by better counsel guide;  
And should both Pride and Prudence plead  
in vain,

There is a warning that must still remain,  
And, though the heart rebell'd, would ever cry  
'Refrain.' "

'He heard, he grieved—so check'd, the eager  
youth

Dared not again repeat th' offensive truth,  
But stopp'd, and fix'd on that loved face an  
eye

Of pleading passion, trembling to reply;  
And that reply was hurried, was express'd  
With bursts of sorrow from a troubled breast;  
He could not yet forbear the tender suit,  
Yet dared not speak—his eloquence was mute.  
But though awhile in silence he suppress  
The pleading voice, and bade his passion rest,  
Yet in each motion, in each varying look,  
In every tender glance, that passion spoke.—  
Words find, ere long, a passage; and once  
more

He warmly urges what he urged before;  
He feels acutely, and he thinks, of course,  
That what he feels his language will enforce;  
Flame will to flame give birth, and fire to fire,  
And so from heart to heart is caught desire;  
He wonders how a gentle mind so long  
Resists the pleading of a love so strong—  
"And can that heart," he cries, "that face  
believe,

And know no softness? Will it yet deny?"—

"I tell thee, George, as I have told before,  
I feel a mother's love, and feel no more;  
A child I bore thee in my arms, and how  
Could I—did prudence yield—receive thee  
now?"

'At her remonstrance hope revived, for oft  
He found her words severe, her accents soft;  
In eyes that threaten'd tears of pity stood,  
And truth she made as gracious as she could;—  
But, when she found the dangerous youth  
would seek

His peace alone, and still his wishes speak,  
Fearful she grew, that, opening thus his heart,  
He might to hers a dangerous warmth impart:  
All her objections slight to him appear'd,—  
But one she had, and now it must be heard.

"Yes, it must be! and he shall under-  
stand

What powers, that are not of the world,  
command;

So shall he cease, and I in peace shall live—"  
Sighing she spoke—"that widowhood can  
give!"

Then to her lover turn'd, and gravely said,  
"Let due attention to my words be paid:  
Meet me to-morrow, and resolve t' obey;"  
Then named the hour and place, and went  
her way.

'Before that hour, or moved by spirit vain  
Of woman's wish to triumph and complain,  
She had his parents summon'd, and had shown  
Their son's strong wishes, nor conceal'd her  
own:

"And do you give," she said, "a parent's aid  
To make the youth of his strange love afraid;  
And, be it sin or not, be all the shame dis-  
play'd."

'The good old pastor wonder'd, seem'd to  
grieve,  
And look'd suspicious on this child of Eve:  
He judg'd his boy, though wild, had never  
dared

To talk of love, had not rebuke been spared;  
But he replied, in mild and tender tone,  
"It is not sin, and therefore shame has none."

'The different ages of the pair he knew,  
And quite as well their different fortunes too:  
A meek, just man; but difference in his sight  
That made the match unequal made it right:  
"His son, his friend united, and become  
Of his own hearth—the comforts of his home—  
Was it so wrong? Perhaps it was her pride  
That felt the distance, and the youth denied?"

'The blushing widow heard, and she retired,  
Musing on what her ancient friend desired;  
She could not, therefore, to the youth com-  
plain,

That his good father wish'd him to refrain;  
She could not add, "Your parents, George,  
obey,  
They will your absence"—no such will had  
they.

'Now, in th' appointed minute met the pair,  
Foredoom'd to meet: George made the  
lover's prayer,—

That was heard kindly; then the lady tried  
For a calm spirit, felt it, and replied.

"George, that I love thee why should I  
suppress?

For 'tis a love that virtue may profess—  
Parental,—frown not,—tender, fix'd, sincere;  
Thou art for dearer ties by much too dear,  
And nearer must not be, thou art so very near:

Nay, do not reason, prudence, pride agree,  
 Our very feelings, that it must not be?  
 Nay, look not so, I shun the task no more,  
 But will to thee thy better self restore.  
 Then hear, and hope not; to the tale I tell  
 Attend! obey me, and let all be well.  
 Love is forbid to me, and thou wilt find  
 All thy too ardent views must be resign'd;  
 Then from thy bosom all such thoughts  
 remove,

And spare the curse of interdicted love.

“If doubts at first assail thee, wait awhile,  
 Nor mock my sadness with satiric smile;  
 For, if not much of other worlds we know,  
 Nor how a spirit speaks in this below,  
 Still there is speech and intercourse; and now  
 The truth of what I tell I first avow,  
 True will I be in all, and be attentive thou.

“I was a Ratcliffe, taught and train'd to live  
 In all the pride that ancestry can give;  
 My only brother, when our mother died,  
 Fill'd the dear offices of friend and guide;  
 My father early taught us all he dared,  
 And for his bolder flights our minds prepared:  
 He read the works of deists, every book  
 From crabbed Hobbes to courtly Boling-  
 broke;

And when we understood not, he would cry,  
 ‘Let the expressions in your memory lie,  
 The light will soon break in, and you will find  
 Rest for your spirits, and be strong of mind!’

“Alas! however strong, however weak,  
 The rest was something we had still to seek!  
 “He taught us duties of no arduous kind,  
 The easy morals of the doubtful mind;  
 He bade us all our childish fears control,  
 And drive the nurse and grandam from the  
 soul;

Told us the word of God was all we saw,  
 And that the law of nature was his law;  
 This law of nature we might find abstruse,  
 But gain sufficient for our common use.

“Thus, by persuasion, we our duties learn'd,  
 And were but little in the cause concern'd.  
 We lived in peace, in intellectual ease,  
 And thought that virtue was the way to please,  
 And pure morality the keeping free  
 From all the stains of vulgar villany.

“But Richard, dear enthusiast! shunn'd  
 reproach,

He let no stain upon his name encroach;

But fled the hated vice, was kind and just,  
 That all must love him, and that all might  
 trust.

“Free, sad discourse was ours; we often  
 sigh'd

To think we could not in some truths confide:  
 Our father's final words gave no content,  
 We found not what his self-reliance meant:  
 To fix our faith some grave relations sought,  
 Doctrines and creeds of various kind they  
 brought,

And we as children heard what they as doctors  
 taught.

“Some to the priest referr'd us, in whose  
 book

No unbeliever could resisting look;  
 Others to some great preacher's, who could  
 tame

The fiercest mind, and set the cold on flame;  
 For him no rival in dispute was found  
 Whom he could not confute or not confound.  
 Some mystics told us of the sign and seal,  
 And what the spirit would in time reveal,  
 If we had grace to wait, if we had hearts to  
 feel:

Others, to reason trusting, said, believe  
 As she directs, and what she proves receive;  
 While many told us, it is all but guess,  
 Stick to your church, and calmly acquiesce.  
 Thus, doubting, wearied, hurried, and per-  
 plex'd,

This world was lost in thinking of the next:  
 When spoke my brother—‘From my soul  
 I hate

This clash of thought, this ever doubting  
 state;

For ever seeking certainty, yet blind  
 In our research, and puzzled when we find.

““Could not some spirit, in its kindness,  
 steal

Back to our world, and some dear truth reveal?  
 Say there is danger,—if it could be done,  
 Sure one would venture,—I would be the one;  
 And when a spirit—much as spirits might—  
 I would to thee communicate my light!’

“I sought my daring brother to oppose,  
 But awful gladness in my bosom rose:  
 I fear'd my wishes; but through all my frame  
 A bold and elevating terror came:  
 Yet with dissembling prudence I replied,  
 ‘Know we the laws that may be thus defied?  
 Should the free spirit to th' embodied tell  
 The precious secret, would it not rebel?’

Yet while I spoke I felt a pleasing glow  
Suffuse my cheek at what I long'd to know ;  
And I, like Eve transgressing, grew more bold,  
And wish'd to hear a spirit and behold.

“ ‘ I have no friend,’ said he, ‘ to not one man

Can I appear ; but, love ! to thee I can :  
Who first shall die ’——I wept, but——I agree

To all thou say’st, dear Richard ! and would be

The first to wing my way, and bring my news to thee.’

“ ‘ Long we conversed, but not till we perceived

A gathering gloom—Our freedom gain’d, we grieved ;

Above the vulgar, as we judged, in mind,  
Below in peace, more sad as more refined ;  
’Twas joy, ’twas sin—Offenders at the time,  
We felt the hurried pleasures of our crime  
With pain that crime creates, and thus in both—

Our mind united as the strongest oath.  
O, my dear George ! in ceasing to obey,  
Misery and trouble meet us in our way !  
I felt as one intruding in a scene  
Where none should be, where none had ever been ;

Like our first parent, I was new to sin,  
But plainly felt its sufferings begin :  
In nightly dreams I walk’d on soil unsound,  
And in my day-dreams endless error found.

“ ‘ With this dear brother I was doom’d to part,

Who, with an husband, shared an troubled heart :

My lord I honour’d ; but I never proved  
The madd’ning joy, the boast of some who loved :

It was a marriage that our friends profess’d  
Would be most happy, and I acquiesced ;  
And we were happy, for our love was calm,  
Not life’s delicious essence, but its balm.

“ ‘ My brother left us,—dear, unhappy boy !  
He never seem’d to taste of earthly joy,  
Never to live on earth, but ever strove  
To gain some tidings of a world above.

“ ‘ Parted from him, I found no more to please,

Ease was my object, and I dwelt in ease ;  
And thus in quiet, not perhaps content,  
A year in wedlock, lingering time ! was spent.

“ ‘ One night I slept not, but I courted sleep,  
And forced my thoughts on tracks they could not keep ;

Till nature, wearied in the strife, reposed,  
And deep forgetfulness my wanderings closed.

“ ‘ My lord was absent—distant from the bed  
A pendent lamp its soften’d lustre shed ;  
But there was light that chased away the gloom,

And brought to view each object in the room :  
These I observed ere yet I sunk in sleep,  
That, if disturb’d not, had been long and deep.

“ ‘ I was awaken’d by some being nigh,  
It seem’d some voice, and gave a timid cry,—  
When sounds, that I describe not, slowly broke

On my attention——‘ Be composed, and look ! ’—

I strove, and I succeeded ; look’d with awe,  
But yet with firmness, and my brother saw.

“ ‘ George, why that smile ?—By all that God has done,

By the great Spirit, by the blessed Son,  
By the one holy Three, by the thrice holy One,  
I saw my brother,—saw him by my bed,  
And every doubt in full conviction fled !—

It was his own mild spirit—He awhile  
Waited my calmness with benignant smile ;  
So softly shines the veiled sun, till past

The cloud, and light upon the world is cast :  
That look composed and soften’d I survey’d,  
And met the glance fraternal less afraid ;  
Though in those looks was something of command,

And traits of what I fear’d to understand.

“ ‘ Then spoke the spirit—George, I pray, attend—

‘ First let all doubts of thy religion end—  
The word reveal’d is true : inquire no more,  
Believe in meekness, and with thanks adore :  
Thy priest attend, but not in all rely,  
And to objectors seek for no reply :

Truth, doubt, and error, will be mix’d below—  
Be thou content the greater truths to know,  
And in obedience rest thee—For thy life  
Thou needest counsel—now a happy wife,  
A widow soon ! and then, my sister, then  
Think not of marriage, think no more of men ;—  
Life will have comforts ; thou wilt much enjoy  
Of moderate good, then do not this destroy ;  
Fear much, and wed no more ; by passion led,  
Shouldst thou again ?—Art thou attending ?

—wed,

Care in thy ways will growl, and anguish  
haunt thy bed :

A brother's warning on thy heart engrave :  
Thou art a mistress—then be not a slave !  
Shouldst thou again that hand in fondness  
give,

What life of misery art thou doom'd to live !  
How wilt thou weep, lament, implore, com-  
plain !

How wilt thou meet derision and disdain !  
And pray to heaven in doubt, and kneel to  
man in vain !

Thou read'st of woes to tender bosoms sent—  
Thine shall with tenfold agony be rent ;  
Increase of anguish shall new years bestow,  
Pain shall on thought and grief on reason  
grow,

And this th' advice I give increase the ill  
I show,

“ ‘A second marriage!—No!—by all that's  
dear !’ ”

I cried aloud—The spirit bade me hear.

“ ‘There will be trial,—how I must not say,  
Perhaps I cannot—listen, and obey !—  
Free is thy will—th' event I cannot see,  
Distinctly cannot, but thy will is free :  
Come, weep not, sister,—spirits can but guess,  
And not ordain—but do not wed distress ;  
For who would rashly venture on a snare ?’ ”  
‘I swear !’ I answer'd.—‘No, thou must  
not swear.’

He said, or I had sworn ; but still the vow  
Was past, was in my mind, and there is now :  
Never ! O, never !—Why that sullen air ?  
Think'st thou—ungenerous !—I would wed  
despair ?

“ ‘Was it not told me thus?—and then I cried,  
‘Art thou in bliss?’—but nothing he replied,  
Save of my fate, for that he came to show,  
Nor of aught else permitted me to know.

“ ‘Forewarn'd, forearm thee, and thy  
way pursue,  
Safe, if thou wilt, not flow'ry—now, adieu !’ ”

“ ‘Nay, go not thus,’ I cried, ‘for this  
will seem

The work of sleep, a mere impressive dream ;  
Give me some token, that I may indeed  
From the suggestions of my doubts be freed !’ ”

“ ‘Be this a token—ere the week be fled  
Shall tidings greet thee from the newly dead.’ ”

“ ‘Nay, but,’ I said, with courage not my  
own,

‘O ! be some signal of thy presence shown ;

Let not this visit with the rising day  
Pass, and be melted like a dream away.’ ”

“ ‘O, woman ! woman ! ever anxious still  
To gain the knowledge, not to curb the will !  
Have I not promised?—Child of sin, attend—  
Make not a lying spirit of thy friend :  
Give me thy hand !’ ”—I gave it, for my soul  
Was now grown ardent, and above control ;  
Eager I stretch'd it forth, and felt the hold  
Of shadowy fingers, more than icy cold :  
A nameless pressure on my wrist was made,  
And instant vanish'd the beloved shade !  
Strange it will seem, but, ere the morning  
came,

I slept, nor felt disorder in my frame :  
Then came a dream—I saw my father's shade,  
But not with awe like that my brother's made;  
And he began—‘What ! made a convert,  
child ?’

Have they my favourite by their creed be-  
guiled ?

Thy brother's weakness I could well foresee,  
But had, my girl, more confidence in thee :  
Art thou, indeed, before their ark to bow ?  
I smled before, but I am angry now :  
Thee will they bind by threats, and thou wilt  
shake

At tales of terror that the miscreants make :  
Between the bigot and enthusiast led,  
Thou hast a world of miseries to dread :  
Think for thyself, nor let the knaves or fools  
Rob thee of reason, and prescribe thee rules.’ ”

“ ‘Soon as I woke, and could my thoughts  
collect,

What can I think, I cried, or what reject ?  
Was it my brother ? Aid me, power divine !  
Have I not seen him, left he not a sign ?  
Did I not then the placid features trace  
That now remain—the air, the eye, the face ?  
And then my father—but how different seem  
These visitations—this, indeed, a dream !

“ ‘Then for that token on my wrist—'tis  
here,

And very slight to you it must appear ;  
Here, I'll withdraw the bracelet—'tis a speck !  
No more ! but 'tis upon my life a check.’ ”—

“ ‘O ! lovely all, and like its sister arm !  
Call this a check, dear lady ? 'tis a charm—  
A slight, an accidental mark—no more ’’—  
“ ‘Slight as it is, it was not there before :  
Then was there weakness, and I bound it—  
Nay !

This is infringement—take those lips away !

"On the fourth day came letters, and I cried,  
Richard is dead, and named the day he died :  
A proof of knowledge, true ! but one, alas !  
of pride.

The signs to me were brought, and not my lord,  
But I impatient waited not the word ;  
And much he marvel'd, reading of the night  
In which th' immortal spirit took its flight.

"Yes ! I beheld my brother at my bed,  
The hour he died ! the instant he was dead—  
His presence now I see ! now trace him as  
he fled.

"Ah ! fly me, George, in very pity, fly ;  
Thee I reject, but yield thee reasons why ;  
Our fate forbids,—the counsel heaven has sent  
We must adopt, or grievously repent ;  
And I adopt."—George humbly bow'd, and  
sigh'd,

But, lost in thought, he look'd not nor replied ;  
Yet feebly utter'd in his sad adieu,  
"I must not doubt thy truth, but perish if  
thou'rt true."

'But when he thought alone, his terror gone  
Of the strange story, better views came on.

"Nay, my enfeebled heart, be not dismay'd !  
A boy again, am I of ghosts afraid ?  
Does she believe it ? Say she does believe,  
Is she not born of error and of Eve ?  
O ! there is lively hope I may the cause  
retrieve."

"If you re-wed," exclaim'd the Ghost—  
For what

Puts he the case, if marry she will not ?  
He knows her fate—but what am I about ?  
Do I believe ?—'tis certain I have doubt,  
And so has she,—what therefore will she do ?  
She the predicted fortune will pursue,  
And by th' event will judge if her strange  
dream was true ;

The strong temptation to her thought applied  
Will gain new strength, and will not be  
denied ;

The very threat against the thing we love  
Will the vex'd spirit to resistance move ;  
With vows to virtue weakness will begin,  
And fears of sinning let in thoughts of sin."

'Strong in her sense of weakness, now with-  
drew

The cautious lady from the lover's view ;  
But she perceived the looks of all were  
changed,—

Her kind old friends grew peevish and  
estranged ;

A fretful spirit reign'd, and discontent  
From room to room in sullen silence went ;  
And the kind widow was distress'd at heart  
To think that she no comfort could impart  
"But he will go," she said, "and he will strive  
In fields of glorious energy to drive  
Love from his bosom—Yes, I then may stay,  
And all will thank me on a future day."

'So judg'd the lady, nor appear'd to grieve,  
Till the young soldier came to take his leave ;  
But not of all assembled—No ! he found  
His gentle sisters all in sorrow drown'd ;  
With many a shaken hand, and many a kiss,  
He cried, "Farewell ! a solemn business this ;  
Nay, Susan, Sophy !—heaven and earth, my  
dears !

I am a soldier—What do I with tears ? "

'He sought his parents ;—they together  
walk'd,

And of their son, his views and dangers, talk'd ;  
They knew not how to blame their friend,  
but still

They murmur'd, "She may save us if she will :  
Were not these visions working in her mind  
Strange things—'tis in her nature to be kind."

'Their son appear'd—He sooth'd them, and  
was bless'd,

But still the fondness of his soul confess'd—  
And where the lady ?—To her room retired !  
Now show, dear son, the courage she required.

'George bow'd in silence, trying for assent  
To his hard fate, and to his trial went :  
Fond, but yet fix'd, he found her in her room ;  
Firm, and yet fearful, she beheld him come :  
Nor sought he favour now—No ! he would  
meet his doom.

"Farewell ! and, Madam, I beseech you  
pray

That this sad spirit soon may pass away ;  
That sword or ball would to the dust restore  
This body, that the soul may grieve no more  
For love rejected—O ! that I could quit  
The life I loathe, who am for nothing fit,  
No, not to die !"—"Unhappy, wilt thou  
make

The house all wretched for thy passion's  
sake ?

And most its grieving object ? "

"Grieving ?—No !

Or as a conqueror mourns a dying foe,  
That makes his triumph sure—Couldst  
thou deplore

The evil done, the pain would be no more

But an accursed dream has steel'd thy breast,  
And all the woman in thy soul suppress'd."

"O! it was vision, George; a vision true  
As ever seer or holy prophet knew."

"Can spirits, lady, though they might alarm,  
Make an impression on that lovely arm?  
A little cold the cause, a little heat,  
Or vein minute, or artery's morbid beat,  
Even beauty these admit."

"I did behold

My brother's form."

"Yes, so thy Fancy told,  
When in the morning she her work survey'd,  
And call'd the doubtful memory to her aid."

"Nay, think! the night he died—the very  
night!"

"'Tis very true, and so perchance he might,  
But in thy mind—not, lady, in thy sight!  
Thou wert not well; forms delicately made  
These dreams and fancies easily invade;  
The mind and body feel the slow disease,  
And dreams are what the troubled fancy  
sees."

"O! but how strange that all should be  
combined!"

"True; but such combinations we may find;  
A dream's predicted number gain'd a prize,  
Yet dreams make no impression on the wise,  
Though some chance good, some lucky gain  
may rise."

"O! but those words, that voice so truly  
known!"

"No doubt, dear lady, they were all thine own;  
Memory for thee thy brother's form portray'd;  
It was thy fear the awful warning made:  
Thy former doubts of a religious kind  
Account for all these wanderings of the mind."

"But then, how different when my father  
came,

These could not in their nature be the same!"

"Yes, all are dreams; but some as we  
awake

Fly off at once, and no impression make;  
Others are felt, and ere they quit the brain  
Make such impression that they come again;  
As half familiar thoughts, and half unknown,  
And scarcely recollected as our own;  
For half a day abide some vulgar dreams,  
And give our grandams and our nurses themes;  
Others, more strong, abiding figures draw  
Upon the brain, and we assert 'I saw';  
And then the fancy on the organs place  
A powerful likeness of a form and face.

"Yet more—in some strong passion's  
troubled reign,

Or when the fever'd blood inflames the brain,  
At once the outward and the inward eye  
The real object and the fancied spy;  
The eye is open, and the sense is true,  
And therefore they the outward object view;  
But while the real sense is fix'd on these,  
The power within its own creation sees;  
And these, when mingled in the mind, create  
Those striking visions which our dreamers  
state;

For knowing that is true that met the sight,  
They think the judgment of the fancy  
right;—

Your frequent talk of dreams has made me  
turn

My mind on them, and these the facts I learn.

"Or should you say, 'tis not in us to take  
Heed in both ways, to sleep and be awake,  
Perhaps the things by eye and mind survey'd  
Are in their quick alternate efforts made;  
For by this mixture of the truth, the dream  
Will in the morning fresh and vivid seem.

"Dreams are like portraits, and we find  
they please

Because they are confess'd resemblances;  
But those strange night-mare visions we  
compare

To waxen figures—they too real are,  
Too much a very truth, and are so just  
To life and death, they pain us or disgust.

"Hence from your mind these idle visions  
shake,

And O! my love, to happiness awake!"

"It was a warning, tempter! from the  
dead;

And, wedding thee, I should to misery  
wed!"

"False and injurious! What! unjust to  
thee?

O! hear the vows of Love—it cannot be;  
What, I forbear to bless thee—I forego  
That first great blessing of existence? No!  
Did every ghost that terror saw arise  
With such prediction, I should say it lies;  
But none there are—a mighty gulf between  
Hides the ideal world from objects seen;  
We know not where unbodied spirits dwell,  
But this we know, they are invisible;—  
Yet I have one that fain would dwell with  
thee,  
And always with thy purer spirit be."



“O! leave me, George!”  
 “To take the field, and die,  
 So leave thee, lady? Yes, I will comply;  
 Thou art too far above me—Ghosts withstand  
 My hopes in vain, but riches guard thy hand,  
 For I am poor—affection and an heart  
 To thee devoted, I but these impart:  
 Then bid me go, I will thy words obey,  
 But let not visions drive thy friend away.”—  
 “Hear me, Oh! hear me—Shall I wed my  
 son?”—

“I am in fondness and obedience one;  
 And I will reverence, honour, love, adore,  
 Be all that fondest sons can be—and more;  
 And shall thy son, if such he be, proceed  
 To fierce encounters, and in battle bleed?  
 No; thou canst weep!”—

“O! leave me, I entreat;  
 Leave me a moment—we shall quickly  
 meet.”—

“No! here I kneel, a beggar at thy feet.”—  
 He said, and knelt—with accents, softer still,  
 He woo’d the weakness of a failing will,  
 And erring judgment—took her hand, and  
 cried,

“Withdraw it not!—O! let it thus abide,  
 Pledge of thy love—upon thy act depend  
 My joy, my hope,—thus they begin or end!  
 Withdraw it not.”—He saw her looks  
 express’d

Favour and grace—the hand was firmer  
 press’d;—

Signs of opposing fear no more were shown,  
 And, as he press’d, he felt it was his own.

‘Soon through the house was known the  
 glad assent,

The night so dreaded was in comfort spent;  
 War was no more, the destined knot was tied,  
 And the fond widow made a fearful bride.

‘Let mortal frailty judge how mortals frail  
 Thus in their strongest resolutions fail,  
 And though we blame, our pity will prevail.  
 ‘Yet, with that Ghost—for so she thought—  
 in view!

When she believed that all he told was true;  
 When every threat was to her mind recall’d,  
 Till it became affrighten’d and appall’d;  
 When Reason pleaded, think! forbear!  
 refrain!

And when, though trifling, stood that mystic  
 stain,

Predictions, warnings, threats, were present  
 all in vain.

‘Th’ exulting youth a mighty conqueror  
 rose,

And who hereafter shall his will oppose?

‘Such is our tale; but we must yet attend  
 Our weak, kind widow to her journey’s end;  
 Upon her death-bed laid, confessing to a  
 friend

Her full belief, for to the hour she died  
 This she profess’d—“The truth I must not  
 hide,

It was my brother’s form, and in the night  
 he died:

In sorrow and in shame has pass’d my time,  
 All I have suffer’d follow from my crime;  
 I sinn’d with warning—when I gave my hand  
 A power within said, urgently,—Withstand!  
 And I resisted—O! my God, what shame,  
 What years of torment from that frailty came;  
 That husband-son!—I will my fault review;  
 What did he not that men or monsters do?  
 His day of love, a brief autumnal day,  
 Ev’n in its dawning hasten’d to decay;  
 Doom’d from our odious union to behold  
 How cold he grew, and then how worse than  
 cold;

Eager he sought me, eagerly to shun,  
 Kneeling he woo’d me, but he scorn’d me,  
 won;

The tears he caused served only to provoke  
 His wicked insult o’er the heart he broke;  
 My fond compliance served him for a jest,  
 And sharpen’d scorn—‘I ought to be  
 distress’d;

Why did I not with my chaste ghost comply?’  
 And with upbraiding scorn he told me why;—  
 O! there was grossness in his soul; his mind  
 Could not be raised, nor soften’d, nor re-  
 fined.

“Twice he departed in his rage, and went  
 I know not where, nor how his days were  
 spent;

Twice he return’d a suppliant wretch, and  
 craved,

Mean as profuse, the trifle I had saved.

“‘I have had wounds, and some that never  
 heal,

What bodies suffer, and what spirits feel;  
 But he is gone who gave them, he is fled  
 To his account! and my revenge is dead—  
 Yet is it duty, though with shame, to give  
 My sex a lesson—let my story live;

For if no ghost the promised visit paid,  
Still was a deep and strong impression made,  
That wisdom had approved, and prudence  
had obey'd ;

But from another world that warning came,  
And O ! in this be ended all my shame !

“ Like the first being of my sex I fell,  
Tempted, and with the tempter doom'd to  
dwell—

He was the master-fiend, and where he reign'd  
was hell.”

‘ This was her last, for she described no  
more

The rankling feelings of a mind so sore,  
But died in peace.—One moral let us  
draw—

Be it a ghost or not the lady saw—

‘ If our discretion tells us how to live,  
We need no ghost a helping hand to  
give ;

But if discretion cannot us restrain,  
It then appears a ghost would come in  
vain.”

## BOOK XVII. THE WIDOW

The morning Walk—Village Scenery—The  
Widow's dwelling—Her Story related—The  
first Husband—His Indulgence—Its Con-  
sequence—Dies—The second—His Au-  
thority—Its Effects—His Death—A third  
Husband—Determinately indulgent—He  
dies also—The Widow's Retirement.

RICHARD one morning—it was custom  
now—

Walk'd and conversed with labourers at the  
plough,

With thrashers hastening to their daily task,  
With woodmen resting o'er the enlivening  
flask,

And with the shepherd, watchful of his fold  
Beneath the hill, and pacing in the cold :  
Further afield he sometimes would proceed,  
And take a path wherever it might lead.

It led him far about to Wickham Green,  
Where stood the mansion of the village queen ;  
Her garden yet its wintry blossoms bore,  
And roses graced the windows and the door—  
That lasting kind, that through the varying  
year

Or in the bud or in the bloom appear ;  
All flowers that now the gloomy days adorn  
Rose on the view, and smiled upon that morn :  
Richard a damsel at the window spied,  
Who kindly drew a useless veil aside,  
And show'd a lady who was sitting by,  
So pensive, that he almost heard her sigh :  
Full many years she could, no question, tell,  
But in her mourning look'd extremely well.

‘ In truth,’ said Richard, when he told at night  
His tale to George, ‘ it was a pleasant sight ;

She look'd like one who could, in tender tone,  
Say, “ Will you let a lady sigh alone ?

See ! Time has touch'd me gently in his race,  
And left no odious furrows in my face ;  
See, too, this house and garden, neat and  
trim,

Kept for its master—Will you stand for  
him ? ”

‘ Say this is vain and foolish if you please,  
But I believe her thoughts resembled these :  
“ Come ! ” said her looks, “ and we will  
kindly take

The visit kindness prompted you to make.”  
And I was sorry that so much good play  
Of eye and attitude were thrown away  
On one who has his lot, on one who had his  
day.’

‘ Your pity, brother,’ George, with smile,  
replied,

‘ You may dismiss, and with it send your  
pride :

No need of pity, when the gentle dame  
Has thrice resign'd and reassumed her name ;  
And be not proud—for, though it might be  
thine,

She would that hand to humbler men resign.

‘ Young she is not,—it would be passing  
strange

If a young beauty thrice her name should  
change :

Yes ! she has years beyond your reckoning  
seen—

Smiles and a window years and wrinkles  
screen ;

But she, in fact, has that which may command  
The warm admirer and the willing hand :

What is her fortune we are left to guess,  
But good the sign—she does not much  
profess ;

Poor she is not,—and there is that in her  
That easy men to strength of mind prefer ;  
She may be made, with little care and skill,  
Yielding her own, t' adopt an husband's will :  
Women there are, who if a man will take  
The helm and steer—will no resistance make ;  
Who, if neglected, will the power assume,  
And then what wonder if the shipwreck come ?

'Queens they will beif man allow the means,  
And give the power to these domestic queens ;  
Whom, if he rightly trains, he may create  
And make obedient members of his state.'

'Harriet at school was very much the same  
As other misses, and so home she came,  
Like other ladies, there to live and learn,  
To wait her season, and to take her turn.

'Their husbands maids as priests their  
livings gain,

The best, they find, are hardest to obtain ;  
On those that offer both awhile debate—

"I need not take it, it is not so late ;  
Better will come if we will longer stay,  
And strive to put ourselves in fortune's way :"  
And thus they wait, till many years are past,  
For what comes slowly—but it comes at last.

'Harriet was wedded,—but it must be said,  
The row'd obedience was not duly paid :  
Hers was an easy man,—it gave him pain  
To hear a lady murmur and complain :  
He was a merchant, whom his father made  
Rich in the gains of a successful trade :  
A lot more pleasant, or a view more fair,  
Has seldom fallen to a youthful pair.

'But what is faultless in a world like this ?  
In every station something seems amiss :  
The lady, married, found the house too small—  
"Two shabby parlours, and that ugly hall !  
Had we a cottage somewhere, and could meet  
One's friends and favourites in one's snug  
retreat ;

Or only join a single room to these,  
It would be living something at our ease,  
And have one's self, at home, the comfort  
that one sees."

'Such powers of reason, and of mind such  
strength,  
Fought with man's fear, and they prevail'd at  
length :

The room was built,—and Harriet did not  
know

A prettier dwelling, either high or low ;  
But Harriet loved such conquests, loved to  
plead

With her reluctant man, and to succeed ;  
It was such pleasure to prevail o'er one  
Who would oppose the thing that still was  
done,

Who never gain'd the race, but yet would  
groan and run.

'But there were times when love and pity  
gave

Whatever thoughtless vanity could crave :  
She now the carriage chose with freshest name,  
And was in quite a fever till it came ;  
But can a carriage be alone enjoy'd ?

The pleasure not partaken is destroy'd ;  
"I must have some good creature to attend  
On morning visits as a kind of friend."

'A courteous maiden then was found to sit  
Beside the lady, for her purpose fit,  
Who had been train'd in all the soothing ways  
And servile duties from her early days ;  
One who had never from her childhood known  
A wish fulfill'd, a purpose of her own :  
Her part it was to sit beside the dame,  
And give relief in every want that came ;  
To soothe the pride, to watch the varying  
look,

And bow in silence to the dumb rebuke.

'This supple being strove with all her skill  
To draw her master's to her lady's will ;  
For they were like the magnet and the steel,  
At times so distant that they could not feel ;  
Then would she gently move them, till she  
saw

That to each other they began to draw ;  
And then would leave them, sure on her return  
In Harriet's joy her conquest to discern.

'She was a mother now, and grieved to find  
The nursery window caught the eastern wind ;  
What could she do with fears like these  
oppress'd ?

She built a room all window'd to the west ;  
For sure in one so dull, so bleak, so old,  
She and her children must expire with cold :  
Meantime the husband murmur'd—"So he  
might ;

She would be judged by 'ousins—Was it  
right ?"

'Water was near them, and her mind afloat,  
The lady saw a cottage and a boat,

And thought what sweet excursions they  
might make,  
How they might sail, what neighbours they  
might take,  
And nicely would she deck the lodge upon  
the lake.

'She now prevail'd by habit; had her will,  
And found her patient husband sad and  
still:

Yet this displeased; she gain'd, indeed, the  
prize,

But not the pleasure of her victories;  
Was she a child to be indulged? He knew  
She would have right, but would have reason  
too.

'Now came the time, when in her husband's  
face

Care, and concern, and caution she could  
trace;

His troubled features gloom and sadness bore,  
Less he resisted, but he suffer'd more;  
His nerves were shook like hers; in him her  
grief

Had much of sympathy, but no relief.

'She could no longer read, and therefore kept  
A girl to give her stories while she wept;  
Better for Lady Julia's woes to cry,  
Than have her own for ever in her eye:  
Her husband grieved, and o'er his spirits came  
Gloom, and disease attack'd his slender frame;  
He felt a loathing for the wretched state  
Of his concerns, so sad, so complicate;  
Grief and confusion seized him in the day,  
And the night pass'd in agony away:

"My ruin comes!" was his awakening  
thought,

And vainly through the day was comfort  
sought;

"There, take my all!" he said, and in his  
dream

Heard the door bolted, and his children  
scream.

And he was right, for not a day arose  
That he exclaim'd not, "Will it never close?"  
"Would it were come!"—but still he shifted

on,  
Till health, and hope, and life's fair views  
were gone.

'Fretful herself, he of his wife in vain  
For comfort sought—"He would be well  
again;

Time would disorders of such nature heal!  
O! if he felt what she was doom'd to feel,

Such sleepless nights! such broken rest!  
her frame

Rack'd with diseases that she could not name!  
With pangs like hers no other was oppress'd!"  
Weeping, she said, and sigh'd herself to rest.

'The suffering husband look'd the world  
around,

And saw no friend: on him misfortune  
frown'd;

Him self-reproach tormented; sorely tried,  
By threats he mourn'd, and by disease he died.

'As weak as wailing infancy or age,  
How could the widow with the world engage?  
Fortune not now the means of comfort  
gave,

Yet all her comforts Harriet wept to have.

"My helpless babes," she said, "will  
nothing know,"

Yet not a single lesson could bestow;  
Her debts would overwhelm her, that was sure,  
But one privation would she not endure;

"We shall want bread! the thing is past a  
doubt."

"Then part with Cousins!"—"Can I do  
without?"

"Dismiss your servants!"—"Spare me them,  
I pray!"

"At least your carriage!"—"What will people  
say?"

"That useless boat, that folly on the lake!"—  
"O! but what cry and scandal will it make!"

It was so hard on her, who not a thing  
Had done such mischief on their heads to  
bring;

This was her comfort, this she would declare,  
And then slept soundly on her pillow'd chair:

When not asleep, how restless was the soul  
Above advice, exempted from control;

For ever begging all to be sincere,  
And never willing any truth to hear;

A yellow paleness o'er her visage spread,  
Her fears augmented as her comforts fled;

Views dark and dismal to her mind appear'd,  
And death she sometimes woo'd, and always  
feard.

'Among the clerks there was a thoughtful  
one,

Who still believed that something might be  
done;

All in his view was not so sunk and lost,  
But of a trial things would pay the cost:

He judg'd the widow, and he saw the way  
In which her husband suffer'd her to stray;

He saw entangled and perplexed affairs,  
And Time's sure hand at work on their  
repairs ;

Children he saw, but nothing could he see  
Why he might not their careful father be ;  
And looking keenly round him, he believed  
That what was lost might quickly be retrieved.

' Now thought our clerk—" I must not mention love,

That she at least must seem to disapprove ;  
But I must fear of poverty enforce,  
And then consent will be a thing of course.

" Madam ! " said he, " with sorrow I relate,  
That our affairs are in a dreadful state ;  
I call'd on all our friends, and they declared  
They dared not meddle—not a creature dared ;  
But still our perseverance chance may aid,  
And though I'm puzzled, I am not afraid ;  
If you, dear lady, will attention give  
To me, the credit of the house shall live ;  
Do not, I pray you, my proposal blame,  
It is my wish to guard your husband's fame,  
And ease your trouble ; then your cares resign  
To my discretion—and, in short, be mine."

" Yours ! O ! my stars !—Your goodness,  
sir, deserves

My grateful thanks—take pity on my nerves ;  
I shake and tremble at a thing so new,  
And fear 'tis what a lady should not do ;  
And then to marry upon ruin's brink  
In all this hurry—What will people think ? "

" Nay, there's against us neither rule nor law,

And people's thinking is not worth a straw ;  
Those who are prudent have too much to do  
With their own cares to think of me and you ;  
And those who are not are so poor a race,  
That what they utter can be no disgrace :—  
Come ! let us now embark, when time and tide  
Invite to sea, in happy hour decide ;  
If yet we linger, both are sure to fail,  
The turning waters and the varying gale ;  
Trust me, our vessel shall be ably steer'd,  
Nor will I quit her, till the rocks are clear'd."

' Allured and frighten'd, soften'd and afraid,  
The widow doubted, ponder'd, and obey'd :  
So were they wedded, and the careful man  
His reformation instantly began ;  
Began his state with vigour to reform,  
And made a calm by laughing at the storm.

' Th' attendant-maiden he dismiss'd—for  
why ?

She might on him and love like his rely :

She needed none to form her children's mind,  
That duty nature to her care assign'd ;  
In vain she mourn'd, it was her health he  
prized,

And hence enforced the measures he advised :  
She wanted air ; and walking, she was told,  
Was safe, was pleasant !—he the carriage sold ;  
He found a tenant who agreed to take  
The boat and cottage on the useless lake ;  
The house itself had now superfluous room,  
And a rich lodger was induced to come.

' The lady wonder'd at the sudden change,  
That yet was pleasant, that was very strange ;  
When every deed by her desire was done,  
She had no day of comfort—no, not one ;  
When nothing moved or stopp'd at her  
request,

Her heart had comfort, and her temper rest ;  
For all was done with kindness,—most polite  
Was her new lord, and she confess'd it right ;  
For now she found that she could gaily live  
On what the chance of common life could give :  
And her sick mind was cured of every ill,  
By finding no compliance with her will ;  
For when she saw that her desires were vain,  
She wisely thought it foolish to complain.

' Born for her man, she gave a gentle sigh  
To her lost power, and grieved not to comply ;  
Within, without, the face of things improved,  
And all in order and subjection moved.

' As wealth increased, ambition now began  
To swell the soul of the aspiring man ;  
In some few years he thought to purchase land,  
And build a seat that Hope and Fancy  
plann'd ;

To this a name his youthful bride should give !  
Harriet, of course, not many years would live ;  
Then he would farm, and every soil should show  
The tree that best upon the place would grow :  
He would, moreover, on the Bench debate  
On sundry questions—when a magistrate ;  
Would talk of all that to the state belongs,  
The rich man's duties, and the poor man's  
wrongs ;

He would with favourites of the people rank,  
And him the weak and the oppress'd should  
thank.

" 'Tis true those children, orphans then !  
would need

Help in a world of trouble to succeed !  
And they should have it—He should then  
possess

All that man needs for earthly happiness.

"Proud words, and vain!" said Doctor Young; and proud  
They are; and vain, were by our clerk allow'd;

For, while he dream'd, there came both pain and cough,

And fever never tamed, and bore him off;  
Young as he was, and planning schemes to live

With more delight than man's success can give;

Building a mansion in his fancy vast,  
Beyond the Gothic pride of ages past!

While this was plann'd, but ere a place was sought,

The timber season'd, or the quarry wrought,  
Came Death's dread summons, and the man was laid

In the poor house the simple sexton made.

'But he had time for thought when he was ill,

And made his lady an indulgent will:

'Tis said he gave, in parting, his advice,

"It is sufficient to be married twice;"

To which she answer'd, as 'tis said, again,

"There's none will have you if you're poor and plain,

And if you're rich and handsome there is none Will take refusal—let the point alone."

'Be this or true or false, it is her praise  
She mourn'd correctly all the mourning days;  
But grieve she did not, for the canker grief  
Soils the complexion, and is beauty's thief;  
Nothing, indeed, so much will discompose  
Our public mourning as our private woes;  
When tender thoughts a widow's bosom probe,  
She thinks not then how graceful sits the robe;

But our nice widow look'd to every fold,  
And every eye its beauty might behold!  
It was becoming; she composed her face,  
She look'd serenely, and she mourn'd with grace.

'Some months were pass'd, but yet there wanted three

Of the full time when widows wives may be;  
One trying year, and then the mind is freed,  
And man may to the vacant throne succeed.

'There was a tenant—he, to wit, who lived  
That cot and lake, that were so much admired:

A man of spirit, one who doubtless meant,  
Though he delay'd awhile, to pay his rent:

The widow's riches gave her much delight,  
And some her claims, and she resolved to write.

"He knew her grievous loss, how every care  
Devolved on her, who had indeed her share;  
She had no doubt of him,—but was ~~as~~ sure  
As that she breathed her money was secure;  
But she had made a rash and idle vow  
To claim her dues, and she must keep it now:  
So, if it suited——"

And for this there came  
A civil answer to the gentle dame:  
Within the letter were excuses, thanks,  
And clean Bank paper from the best of banks;  
There were condolence, consolation, praise,  
With some slight hints of danger in delays;  
With these good things were others from the lake,

Perch that were wish'd to salmon for her sake,  
And compliment as sweet as new-born hope could make.

'This led to friendly visits, social calls,  
And much discourse of races, rambles, balls;  
But all in proper bounds, and not a word  
Before its time,—the man was not absurd,  
Nor was he cold; but when she might expect,  
A letter came, and one to this effect.

"That if his eyes had not his love convey'd,  
They had their master shamefully betray'd;  
But she must know the flame, that he was sure,  
Nor she could doubt, would long as life endure:

Both were in widow'd state, and both possess'd  
Of ample means to make their union bless'd;  
That she had been confined he knew for truth,  
And begg'd her to have pity on her youth;  
Youth, he would say, and he desired his wife  
To have the comforts of an easy life:

She loved a carriage, loved a decent seat  
To which they might at certain times retreat;  
Servants indeed were sorrows,—yet a few  
They still must add, and do as others do:  
She too would some attendant damsel need,  
To hear, to speak, to travel, or to read:"

In short, the man his remedies assign'd  
For his foreknown diseases in the mind:—

"First," he presumed, "that in a nervous case  
Nothing was better than a change of place:"  
He added, too, "'Twas well that he could prove

That his was pure, disinterested love;  
Not as when lawyers couple house and land  
In such a way as none can understand;

No ! thanks to Him that every good supplied,  
He had enough, and wanted nought beside !  
Merit was all."

"Well ! now, she would protest,  
This was a letter prettily express'd."  
To every female friend away she flew  
To ask advice, and say, "What shall I do ?"  
She kiss'd her children,—and she said, with  
tears,

"I wonder what is best for you, my dears ?  
How can I, darlings, to your good attend  
Without the help of some experienced friend,  
Who will protect us all, or, injured, will  
defend ?"

The widow then ask'd counsel of her heart,  
In vain, for that had nothing to impart ;  
But yet with that, or something for her guide,  
She to her swain thus guardedly replied.

"She must believe he was sincere, for why  
Should one who needed nothing deign to lie ?  
But though she could and did his truth admit,  
She could not praise him for his taste a bit ;  
And yet men's tastes were various, she confess'd,

And none could prove his own to be the best ;  
It was a vast concern, including all  
That we can happiness or comfort call ;  
And yet she found that those who waited long  
Before their choice, had often chosen wrong ;  
Nothing, indeed, could for her loss atone,  
But 'twas the greater that she lived alone ;  
She, too, had means, and therefore what the  
use

Of more, that still more trouble would produce ?  
And pleasure too she own'd, as well as care,  
Of which, at present, she had not her share.

"The things he offer'd, she must needs  
confess,

They were all women's wishes, more or less ;  
But were expensive ; though a man of sense  
Would by his prudence lighten the expense :  
Prudent he was, but made a sad mistake  
When he proposed her faded face to take ;  
And yet 'tis said there's beauty that will last  
When the rose withers and the bloom be past.

"One thing displeased her,—that he could  
suppose

He might so soon his purposes disclose ;  
Yet had she hints of such intent before,  
And would excuse him if he wrote no more :  
What would the world ?—and yet she judged  
them fools

Who let the world's suggestions be their rules :

What would her friends ?—Yet in her own  
affairs

It was her business to decide, not theirs :  
Adieu ! then, sir," she added ; "thus you find  
The changeless purpose of a steady mind,  
In one now left alone, but to her fate resign'd."

The marriage follow'd ; and th' experienced  
dame

Consider'd what the conduct that became  
A thrice-devoted lady—She confess'd  
That when indulged she was but more dis-  
tress'd ;

And by her second husband when controll'd,  
Her life was pleasant, though her love was  
cold ;

"Then let me yield," she said, and with a sigh,  
"Let me to wrong submit, with right comply."

"Alas ! obedience may mistake, and they  
Who reason not will err when they obey ;  
And fated was the gentle dame to find  
Her duty wrong, and her obedience blind.

The man was kind, but would have no  
dispute,

His love and kindness both were absolute ;  
She needed not her wishes to express  
To one who urged her on to happiness ;  
For this he took her to the lakes and seas,  
To mines and mountains, nor allow'd her ease,  
She must be pleased, he said, and he must  
live to please.

He hurried north and south, and east and  
west,  
When age required they would have time to  
rest :

He in the richest dress her form array'd,  
And cared not what he promised, what he  
paid ;

She should share all his pleasures as her own,  
And see whatever could be sought or shown.

This run of pleasure for a time she bore,  
And then affirm'd that she could taste no  
more ;

She loved it while its nature it retain'd,  
But made a duty, it displeased and pain'd :  
"Have we not means ?" the joyous husband  
cried ;

"But I am wearied out," the wife replied ;  
"Wearied with pleasure ! Thing till now  
unheard—

Are all that sweeten trouble to be fear'd ?  
'Tis but the sameness tires you,—cross the  
seas,

And let us taste the world's varieties.

“ ‘Tis said, in Paris that a man may live  
In all the luxuries a world can give,  
And in a space confined to narrow bound  
All the enjoyments of our life are found ;  
There we may eat and drink, may dance and  
dress,

And in its very essence joy possess ;  
May see a moving crowd of lovely dames,  
May win a fortune at your favourite games ;  
May hear the sounds that ravish human sense,  
And all without receding foot from thence.”

‘The conquer’d wife, resistless and afraid,  
To the strong call a sad obedience paid.

‘As we an infant in its pain, with sweets  
Loved once, now loath’d, torment him till he eats,  
Who on the authors of his new distress  
Looks trembling with disgusted weariness,  
So Harriet felt, so look’d, and seem’d to say,  
“O! for a day of rest, an holiday!”

‘At length her courage rising with her fear,  
She said, “Our pleasures may be bought too  
dear!”

‘To this he answer’d—“Dearest! from thy  
heart

Bid every fear of evil times depart ;  
I ever trusted in the trying hour  
To my good stars, and felt the ruling power ;  
When want drew nigh, his threat’ning speed  
was stopp’d,

Some virgin aunt, some childless uncle  
dropp’d ;

In all his threats I sought expedients new,  
And my last, best resource was found in you.”

‘Silent and sad the wife beheld her doom,  
And sat her down to see the ruin come ;  
And meet the ills that rise where money fails,  
Debts, threats and duns, bills, bailiffs, writs  
and jails.

‘These was she spared ; ere yet by want  
oppress’d,

Came one more fierce than bailiff in arrest ;  
Amid a scene where Pleasure never came,  
Though never ceased the mention of his name,  
The husband’s heated blood received the  
breath

Of strong disease, that bore him to his death.

‘Her all collected,—whether great or small  
The sum, I know not, but collected all ;—

The widow’d lady to her cot retired,  
And there she lives delighted and admired :

Civil to all, compliant and polite,  
Disposed to think “whatever is, is right ;”  
She wears the widow’s weeds, she gives the  
widow’s mite.

At home awhile, she in the autumn finds  
The sea an object for reflecting minds,  
And change for tender spirits ; there she  
reads,

And weeps in comfort in her graceful weeds.  
‘What gives our tale its moral ? Here we  
find

That wives like this are not for rule design’d,  
Nor yet for blind submission ; happy they,  
Who while they feel it pleasant to obey,  
Have yet a kind companion at their side  
Who in their journey will his power divide,  
Or yield the reins, and bid the lady guide ;  
Then points the wonders of the way, and makes  
The duty pleasant that she undertakes ;  
He shows her objects as they move along,  
And gently rules the movements that are  
wrong :

He tells her all the skilful driver’s art,  
And smiles to see how well she acts her part ;  
Nor praise denies to courage or to skill,  
In using power that he resumes at will.’

## BOOK XVIII. ELLEN

A Morning Ride—A Purchase of the Squire—  
The Way to it described—The former  
Proprietor—Richard’s Return—Inquiries  
respecting a Lady whom he had seen—Her  
History related—Her attachment to a  
Tutor—They are parted—Impediments  
removed—How removed in vain—Fate of  
the Lover—Of Ellen.

BLEAK was the morn—said Richard, with  
a sigh,

‘I must depart!’—‘That, Brother, I deny,’

Said George—‘You may ; but I perceive not  
why.’

This point before had been discuss’d, but  
still

The guest submitted to the ruling will ;  
But every day gave rise to doubt and  
fear,—

He heard not now, as he was wont to hear,  
That all was well!—though little was ex-  
press’d,

It seem’d to him the writer was distress’d ;



Restrain'd ! there was attempt and strife to please,

Pains and endeavour—not Matilda's ease ;—  
Not the pure lines of love ! the guileless friend  
In all her freedom—What could this portend ?  
'Fancy !' said George, 'the self-tormentor's  
pain'—

And Richard still consented to remain.

'Ride you this fair cool morning ?' said  
the squire :

Do—for a purchase I have made inquire,  
And with you take a will complacently  
t' admire :

Southward at first, dear Richard, make your  
way,

Cross Hilton Bridge, move on through  
Broken Clay,

At Dunham Wood turn duly to the east,  
And there your eyes upon the ocean feast ;  
Then ride above the cliff, or ride below,  
You'll be enraptured, for your taste I know ;  
It is a prospect that a man might stay  
To his bride hastening on his wedding-day ;  
At Tilburn Sluice once more ascend and view  
A decent house ; an ample garden too,  
And planted well behind—a lively scene, and  
new ;

A little taste, a little pomp display'd,  
By a dull man, who had retired from trade  
To enjoy his leisure—Here he came prepared  
To farm, nor cost in preparation spared ;  
But many works he purchased, some he read,  
And often rose with projects in his head,  
Of crops in courses raised, of herds by  
matching bred.

'We had just found these little humours out,  
Just saw—he saw not—what he was about ;  
Just met as neighbours, still disposed to meet,  
Just learn'd the current tales of Dowling  
Street,

And were just thinking of our female friends,  
Saying—"You know not what the man  
intends,

A rich, kind, hearty"—and it might be true  
Something he wish'd, but had not time to do ;  
A cold ere yet the falling leaf ! of small  
Effect till then, was fatal in the fall ;

And of that house was his possession brief—  
Go ; and guard well against the falling leaf.

'But hear me, Richard, looking to my ease,  
Try if you can find something that will please ;  
Faults if you see, and such as must abide,  
Say they are small, or say that I can hide ;

But faults that I can change, remove, or  
mend,

These like a foe detect—or like a friend.

'Mark well the rooms, and their propor-  
tions learn,

In each some use, some elegance discern ;  
Observe the garden, its productive wall,  
And find a something to commend in all ;  
Then should you praise them in a knowing  
way,

I'll take it kindly—that is well—be gay.

'Nor pass the pebbled cottage as you rise  
Above the sluice, till you have fix'd your eyes  
On the low woodbined window, and have seen,  
So fortune favour you, the ghost within ;  
Take but one look, and then your way pursue,  
It flies all strangers, and it knows not you.'

Richard return'd, and by his Brother stood,  
Not in a pensive, not in pleasant mood ;  
But by strong feeling into stillness wrought,  
As nothing thinking, or with too much  
thought ;

Or like a man who means indeed to speak,  
But would his hearer should his purpose seek.

When George—"What is it, Brother, you  
would hide ?"

Or what confess ?—"Who is she ?" he  
replied,

'That angel whom I saw, to whom is she  
allied ?

Of this fair being let me understand,  
And I will praise your purchase, house and  
land.

'Hers was that cottage on the rising ground,  
West of the waves, and just beyond their  
sound ;

'Tis larger than the rest, and whence, indeed,  
You might expect a lady to proceed ;  
But O ! this creature, far as I could trace,  
Will soon be carried to another place.

'Fair, fragile thing ! I said, when first my  
eye

Caught hers, wilt thou expand thy wings and  
fly ?

Or wilt thou vanish ? beauteous spirit—stay !  
For will it not (I question'd) melt away ?

No ! it was mortal—I unseen was near,  
And saw the bosom's sigh, the standing tear !  
She thought profoundly, for I stay'd to look,  
And first she read, then laid aside her book ;  
Then on her hand reclined her lovely head,  
And seem'd unconscious of the tear she  
shed.

"Art thou so much," I said, "to grieve a prey?"

Till pity pain'd me, and I rode away.

"Tell me, my Brother, is that sorrow dread  
For the great change that bears her to the  
dead?"

Has she connexions? does she love?—I feel  
Pity and grief, wilt thou her woes reveal?"

"They are not lasting, Richard, they are  
woes

Chastised and meek! she sings them to  
repose;

If not, she reasons; if they still remain,  
She finds resource, that none shall find in vain.

"Whether disease first grew upon regret,  
Or nature gave it, is uncertain yet,  
And must remain; the frame was slightly  
made,

That grief assail'd, and all is now decay'd!

"But though so willing from the world to  
part,

I must not call her case a broken heart;  
Nor dare I take upon me to maintain  
That hearts once broken never heal again."

"She was an only daughter, one whose sire  
Loved not that girls to knowledge should  
aspire;

But he had sons, and Ellen quickly caught  
Whatever they were by their masters taught;  
This, when the father saw—"It is the turn  
Of her strange mind," said he, "but let her  
learn;

"Tis almost pity with that shape and face—  
But is a fashion, and brings no disgrace;  
Women of old wrote verse, or for the stage  
Brought forth their works! they now are  
reasoners sage,

And with severe pursuits dare grapple and  
engage.

If such her mind, I shall in vain oppose,  
If not, her labours of themselves will close."

"Ellen," 'twas found, had skill without pre-  
tence,

And silenced envy by her meek good sense;  
That Ellen learnt, her various knowledge  
proved;

Soft words and tender looks, that Ellen loved;  
For he who taught her brothers found in her  
A constant, ready, eager auditor;

This he perceived, nor could his joy disguise,  
It tuned his voice, it sparkled in his eyes.

"Not very young, nor very handsome he,  
But very fit an Abelard to be;

His manner and his meekness hush'd alarm  
In all but Ellen—Ellen felt the charm;  
Hers was fond "filial love," she found delight  
To have her mind's dear father in her sight;

"But soon the borrow'd notion she resign'd!  
He was no father—even to the mind.

"But Ellen had her comforts—"He will  
speak,"

She said, "for he beholds me fond and weak;  
Fond, and he therefore may securely plead,—  
Weak, I have therefore of his firmness need;  
With whom my father will his Ellen trust,  
Because he knows him to be kind and just."

"Alas! too well the conscious lover knew  
The parent's mind, and well the daughter's  
too;

He felt of duty the imperious call,  
Beheld his danger, and must fly or fall.  
What would the parent, what his pupils think?

O! he was standing on perdition's brink:  
In his dilemma fight alone remain'd,  
And could he fly whose very soul was chain'd?  
He knew she loved; she tried not to conceal  
A hope she thought that virtue's self might  
feel.

"Ever of her and her frank heart afraid,  
Doubting himself, he sought in absence, aid,  
And had resolved on flight, but still the act  
delay'd;

At last so high his apprehension rose,  
That he would both his love and labour close.

"While undisclosed my fear each instant  
grows,

And I lament the guilt that no one knows,  
Success undoes me, and the view that cheers  
All other men, all dark to me appears!"

"Thus as he thought, his Ellen at his side  
Her soothing softness to his grief applied;  
With like effect as water cast on flame,  
For he more heated and confused became,  
And broke in sorrow from the wondering  
maid,

Who was at once offended and afraid;  
Yet "Do not go!" she cried, and was awhile  
obey'd.

"Art thou then ill, dear friend?" she  
ask'd, and took

His passive hand—"How very pale thy look!  
And thou art cold, and tremblest—pray thee  
tell

Thy friend, thy Ellen, is her master well?

And let her with her loving care attend  
To all that vexes and disturbs her friend."

"Nay, my dear lady! we have all our cares,  
And I am troubled with my poor affairs:  
Thou canst not aid me, Ellen; could it be  
And might it, doubtless, I would fly to thee;  
But we have sundry duties, and must all,  
Hard as it may be, go where duties call—  
Suppose the trial were this instant thine,  
Could thou the happiest of thy views resign  
At duty's strong command?"—"If thou  
wert by,"

Said the unconscious maiden, "I would try!"—  
And as she sigh'd she heard the soft responsive sigh.

"And then assuming steadiness, "Adieu!"  
He cried, and from the grieving Ellen flew;  
And to her father with a bleeding heart  
He went, his grief and purpose to impart;  
Told of his health, and did in part confess  
That he should love the noble maiden less.

"The parent's pride to sudden rage gave  
way—

"And the girl loves! that plainly you would  
say—

And you with honour, in your pride, retire!—  
Sir, I your prudence envy and admire."  
But here the father saw the rising frown,  
And quickly let his lofty spirit down.

"Forgive a parent!—I may well excuse  
A girl who could perceive such worth and  
choose

To make it hers; we must not look to meet  
All we might wish;—Is age itself discreet?  
Where conquest may not be, 'tis prudence to  
retreat."

"Then with the kindness worldly minds  
assume

He praised the self-pronounced and rigorous  
doom;

He wonder'd not that one so young should  
love,

And much he wish'd he could the choice  
approve;

Much he lamented such a mind to lose,  
And begg'd to learn if he could aid his views,  
If such were form'd—then closed the short  
account,

And to a shilling paid the full amount.

"So Cecil left the mansion, and so flew  
To foreign shores, without an interview;  
He must not say, I love—he could not say,  
Adieu!

"Long was he absent; as a guide to youth,  
With grief contending, and in search of truth,  
In courting peace, and trying to forget  
What was so deeply interesting yet.

"A friend in England gave him all the news,  
A sad indulgence that he would not lose;  
He told how Ellen suffer'd, how they sent  
The maid from home in sullen discontent,  
With some relation on the Lakes to live,  
In all the sorrow such retirements give;  
And there she roved among the rocks, and took  
Moss from the stone, and pebbles from the  
brook;

Gazed on the flies that settled on the flowers,  
And so consumed her melancholy hours.

"Again he wrote—The father then was dead,  
And Ellen to her native village fled,  
With native feeling—there she oped her door,  
Her heart, her purse, and comforted the poor,  
The sick, the sad,—and there she pass'd her  
days,

Deserving much, but never seeking praise,  
Her task to guide herself, her joy the fallen  
to raise.

Nor would she nicely faults and merits weigh,  
But loved the impulse of her soul t' obey;  
The prayers of all she heard, their sufferings  
view'd,

Nor turn'd from any, save when Love pursued;  
For though to love disposed, to kindness  
prone,

She thought of Cecil, and she lived alone.

"Thus heard the lover of the life she past  
Till his return,—and he return'd at last;  
For he had saved, and was a richer man  
Than when to teach and study he began;  
Something his father left, and he could fly  
To the loved country where he wish'd to die.

"And now," he said, "this maid with  
gentle mind

May I not hope to meet, as good, as kind,  
As in the days when first her friend she knew  
And then could trust—and he indeed is true?  
She knew my motives, and she must approve  
The man who dared to sacrifice his love  
And fondest hopes to virtue: virtuous she,  
Nor can resent that sacrifice in me."

"Hereason'd thus, but fear'd, and sought the  
friend

In his own country, where his doubts must  
end;

They then together to her dwelling came,  
And by a servant sent her lover's name,

A modest youth, whom she before had known,  
His favourite then, and doubtless *then* her own.

'They in the carriage heard the servants  
speak

At Ellen's door—"A maid so heavenly meek,  
Who would all pain extinguish! Yet will she  
Pronounce my doom, I feel the certainty!"—

"Courage!" the friend exclaim'd, "the  
lover's fear

Grows without ground;" but Cecil would  
not hear:

He seem'd some dreadful object to explore,  
And fix'd his fearful eye upon the door,  
Intensely longing for reply—the thing  
That must to him his future fortune bring;  
And now it brought! like Death's cold hand  
it came—

"The lady was a stranger to the name!"

'Backward the lover in the carriage fell,  
Weak, but not fainting—"All," said he, "is  
well!

Return with me—I have no more to seek!"  
And this was all the woful man would speak.

'Quickly he settled all his worldly views,  
And sail'd from home, his fiercer pains to lose  
And nurse the milder—now with labour less  
He might his solitary world possess,  
And taste the bitter-sweet of love in idleness.

'Greece was the land he chose; a mind  
decay'd

And ruin'd there through glorious ruin  
stray'd;

There read, and walk'd, and mused,—there  
loved, and wept, and pray'd.

Nor would he write, nor suffer hope to live,  
But gave to study all his mind could give;

Till, with the dead conversing, he began  
To lose the habits of a living man,

Save that he saw some wretched, them he  
tried

To soothe,—some doubtful, them he strove  
to guide;

Nor did he lose the mind's ennobling joy  
Of that new state that death must not

destroy;

What Time had done we know not,—Death  
was nigh,

To his first hopes the lover gave a sigh,  
But hopes more new and strong confirm'd his  
wish to die.

'Meantime poor Ellen in her cottage thought  
"That he would seek her—sure she should be  
sought—

She did not mean—It was an evil hour,  
Her thoughts were guardless, and beyond her  
power;

And for one speech, and that in rashness  
made!

Have I no friend to soothe him and persuade?  
He must not leave me—He again will come,  
And we shall have one hope, one heart, one  
home!"

'But when she heard that he on foreign  
ground

Sought his lost peace, hers never more was  
found;

But still she felt a varying hope that love  
Would all these slight impediments remove;—

"Has he no friend to tell him that our pride  
Resents a moment and is satisfied?

Soon as the hasty sacrifice is made,  
A look will soothe us, and a tear persuade;

Have I no friend to say 'Return again,  
Reveal your wishes, and relieve her pain?'"

'With suffering mind the maid her prospects  
view'd,

That hourly varied with the varying mood;  
As past the day, the week, the month, the  
year,

The faint hope sicken'd, and gave place to  
fear.

'No Cecil came!—"Come, peevish and  
unjust!"

Sad Ellen cried, "why cherish this disgust?  
Thy Ellen's voice could charm thee once, but  
thou

Canst nothing see or hear of Ellen now!"

'Yes! she was right; the grave on him  
was closed,

And there the lover and the friend reposed.  
The news soon reach'd her, and she then

replied

In his own manner—"I am satisfied!"

'To her a lover's legacy is paid,  
The darling wealth of the devoted maid;

From this her best and favourite books she  
buys,

From this are doled the favourite charities;  
And when a tale or face affects her heart,  
This is the fund that must relief impart.

'Such have the ten last years of Ellen been!  
Her very last that sunken eye has seen!

That half angelic being still must fade  
Till all the angel in the mind be made;—

And now the closing scene will shortly come—  
She cannot visit sorrow at her home;

But still she feeds the hungry, still prepares  
The usual softeners of the peasant's cares,  
And though she prays not with the dying  
now,  
She teaches them to die, and shows them  
how.'

'Such is my tale, dear Richard, but that  
told

I must all comments on the text withhold;  
What is the sin of grief I cannot tell,  
Nor of the sinners who have loved too well;  
But to the cause of mercy I incline,  
Or, O! my Brother, what a fate is mine!'

## BOOK XIX. WILLIAM BAILEY

Discourse on Jealousy—Of unsuspecting Men  
—Visit William and his wife—His Dwelling  
—Story of William and Fanny—Character  
of both—Their Contract—Fanny's Visit to  
an Aunt—Its Consequences—Her Father's  
Expectation—His Death—William a  
Wanderer—His Mode of Living—The  
Acquaintance he forms—Travels across the  
Kingdom—Whom he finds—The Event of  
their Meeting.

THE letters Richard in a morning read  
To quiet and domestic comforts led;  
And George, who thought the world could  
not supply

Comfort so pure, reflected with a sigh;  
Then would pursue the subject half in play,  
Half earnest, till the sadness wore away.

They spoke of Passion's errors, Love's  
disease,

His pains, afflictions, wrongs, and jealousies;  
Of Herod's vile commandment—that his wife  
Should live no more, when he no more had  
life;

He could not bear that royal Herod's spouse  
Should, as a widow, make her second vows;  
Or that a mortal with his queen should wed,  
Or be the rival of the mighty dead.

'Herods,' said Richard, 'doubtless may be  
found,

But haply do not in the world abound;  
Ladies, indeed, a dreadful lot would have,  
If jealousy could act beyond the grave:  
No doubt Othello's every place supply,  
Though every Desdemona does not die;  
But there are lovers in the world, who live  
Slaves to the sex, and every fault forgive.'

'I know,' said George, 'a happy man and  
kind,

Who finds his wife is all he wish'd to find,  
A mild, good man, who, if he nothing sees,  
Will suffer nothing to disturb his ease;

Who, ever yielding both to smiles and sighs,  
Admits no story that a wife denies,—  
She guides his mind, and she directs his eyes.

'Richard, there dwells within a mile a  
pair

Of good examples,—I will guide you there:  
Such man is William Bailey,—but his spouse  
Is virtue's self since she had made her vows:  
I speak of ancient stories, long worn out,  
That honest William would not talk about;  
But he will sometimes check her starting tear,  
And call her self-correction too severe.

'In their own inn the gentle pair are placed,  
Where you behold the marks of William's  
taste:

They dwell in plenty, in respect, and peace,  
Landlord and lady of the Golden Fleece:  
Public indeed their calling,—but there come  
No brawl, no revel to that decent room;

All there is still, and comely to behold,  
Mild as the fleece, and pleasant as the gold;  
But mild and pleasant as they now appear,  
They first experienced many a troubled year;  
And that, if known, might not command our  
praise,

Like the smooth tenor of their present days.

'Our hostess, now so grave and steady  
grown,

Has had some awkward trials of her own:  
She was not always so resign'd and meek,—  
Yet can I little of her failings speak;  
Those she herself will her misfortunes deem,  
And slides discreetly from the dubious theme;  
But you shall hear the tale that I will tell,  
When we have seen the mansion where they  
dwell.'

They saw the mansion,—and the couple  
made

Obeisance due, and not without parade:  
'His honour, still obliging, took delight  
To make them pleasant in each other's sight;

It was their duty—they were very sure  
It was their pleasure.'

This they could endure,  
Nor turn'd impatient—In the room around  
Were care and neatness: instruments were  
found

For sacred music, books with prints and notes  
By learned men and good, whom William  
quotes

In mode familiar—Beveridge, Doddridge,  
Hall,

Pyle, Whitby, Hammond—he refers to all.  
Next they beheld his garden, fruitful, nice,  
And, as he said, his little paradise.

In man and wife appear'd some signs of  
pride,

Which they perceived not, or they would not  
hide,—

'Their honest saving, their good name, their  
skill,

His honour's land, which they had grace to  
till;

And more his favour shown, with all their  
friends' good will.'

This past, the visit was with kindness closed,  
And George was ask'd to do as he proposed.

'Richard,' said he, 'though I myself  
explore

With no distaste the annals of the poor,  
And may with safety to a brother show

What of my humble friends I chance to know,  
Richard, there are who call the subjects low.

'The host and hostess of the Fleece—'tis  
base—

Would I could cast some glory round the  
place!

'The lively heroine once adorn'd a farm,—  
And William's virtue has a kind of charm:

Nor shall we, in our apprehension, need  
Riches or rank—I think I may proceed:

Virtue and worth there are who will not see  
In humble dress, but low they cannot be.'

—  
'The youth's addresses pleased his favourite  
maid,—

They wish'd for union, but were both afraid;  
They saw the wedded poor,—and fear the  
bliss delay'd:

Yet they appear'd a happier lass and swain  
Than those who will not reason or refrain.

William was honest, simple, gentle, kind,  
Laborious, studious, and to thrift inclined;

More neat than youthful peasant in his dress,  
And yet so careful, that it cost him less:

He kept from inns, though doom'd an inn to  
keep,

And all his pleasures and pursuits were cheap:  
Yet would the youth perform a generous deed,

When reason saw or pity felt the need;

He of his labour and his skill would lend,

Nay, of his money, to a suffering friend.

'William had manual arts,—his room was  
graced

With carving quaint, that spoke the master's  
taste;

But if that taste admitted some dispute,  
He charm'd the nymphs with flageolet and

flute.

'Constant at church, and there a little proud,  
He sang with boldness, and he read aloud;

Self-taught to write, he his example took  
And form'd his letters from a printed book.

'I've heard of ladies who profess'd to see  
In a man's writing what his mind must be;

As Doctor Spurzheim's pupils, when they  
look

Upon a skull, will read it as a book—

Our talents, tendencies, and likings trace,  
And find for all the measure and the place:

'Strange times! when thus we are com-  
pletely read

By man or woman, by the hand or head!  
Believe who can,—but William's even mind

All who beheld might in his writing find;  
His not the scratches where we try in vain

Meanings and words to construe or explain.

'But with our village hero to proceed,—  
He read as learned clerks are wont to read;

Solemn he was in tone, and slow in pace,  
By nature gifted both with strength and grace.

'Black parted locks his polish'd forehead  
press'd;

His placid looks an easy mind confess'd;  
His smile content, and seldom more, convey'd;

Not like the smile of fair illusive maid,  
When what she feels is hid, and what she

wills betray'd.

'The lighter damsels call'd his manner prim,  
And laugh'd at virtue so array'd in him;

But they were wanton, as he well replied,  
And hoped their own would not be strongly

tried:

Yet was he full of glee, and had his strokes

Of rustic wit, his repartees and jokes;

Nor was averse, ere yet he pledged his love,  
To stray with damsels in the shady grove;  
When he would tell them, as they walk'd  
along,

How the birds sang, and imitate their song :  
In fact, our rustic had his proper taste,  
Was with peculiar arts and manners graced—  
And Absolon had been, had Absolon been  
chaste.

'Frances, like William, felt her heart incline  
To neat attire—but Frances would be fine :  
Though small the farm, the farmer's daughter  
knew

Her rank in life, and she would have it too :  
This, and this only, gave the lover pain,  
He thought it needless, and he judged it vain :  
Advice in hints he to the fault applied,  
And talk'd of sin, of vanity, and pride.

"And what is proud," said Frances, "but to  
stand

Singing at church, and sawing thus your hand?  
Looking at heaven above, as if to bring  
The holy angels down to hear you sing ?  
And when you write, you try with all your  
skill,

And cry, no wonder that you wrote so ill !  
For you were ever to yourself a rule,  
And humbly add, you never were at school—  
Is that not proud?—And I have heard  
beside,

The proudest creatures have the humblest  
pride :

If you had read the volumes I have hired,  
You'd see your fault, nor try to be admired ;  
For they who read such books can always  
tell

The fault within, and read the mind as well."

'William had heard of hiring books before,  
He knew she read, and he inquired no more ;  
On him the subject was completely lost,  
What he regarded was the time and cost ;  
Yet that was trifling—just a present whim,  
"Novels and stories ! what were they to him?"

'With such slight quarrels, or with those as  
slight,

They lived in love, and dream'd of its delight.  
Her duties Fanny knew, both great and small,  
And she with diligence observed them all ;  
If e'er she fail'd a duty to fulfil,  
'Twas childish error, not rebellious will ;  
For her much reading, though it touch'd her  
heart,

Could neither vice nor indolence impart.

'Yet, when from William and her friends  
retired,

She found her reading had her mind inspired  
With hopes and thoughts of high mysterious  
things,

Such as the early dream of kindness brings ;  
And then she wept, and wonder'd as she read,  
And new emotions in her heart were bred :  
She sometimes fancied that when love was true  
'Twas more than she and William ever knew ;  
More than the shady lane in summer-eve,  
More than the sighing when he took his leave ;  
More than his preference when the lads  
advance

And choose their partners for the evening  
dance ;

Nay, more than midnight thoughts and  
morning dreams,

Or talk when love and marriage are the  
themes ;

In fact, a something not to be defined,  
Of all subduing, all commanding kind,  
That fills the fondest heart, that rules the  
proudest mind.

'But on her lover Fanny still relied,  
Her best companion, her sincerest guide,  
On whom she could rely, in whom she would  
confide.

'All jealous fits were past ; in either now  
Were tender wishes for the binding vow ;  
There was no secret one alone possess'd,  
There was no hope that warm'd a single  
breast ;

Both felt the same concerns their thoughts  
employ,

And neither knew one solitary joy.

'Then why so easy, William ? why consent  
To wait so long ? thou wilt at last repent ;  
"Within a month," does Care and Prudence  
say,

If all be ready, linger not a day ;  
Ere yet the choice be made, on choice debate,  
But having chosen, dally not with fate.

'While yet to wait the pair were half content,  
And half disposed their purpose to repent,  
A spinster-aunt, in some great baron's place,  
Would see a damsel, pride of all her race :  
And Fanny, flatter'd by the matron's call,  
Obey'd her aunt, and long'd to see the Hall ;  
For halls and castles in her fancy wrought,  
And she accounts of love and wonder sought ;  
There she expected strange events to learn,  
And take in tender secrets fond concern ;

There she expected lovely nymphs to view,  
Perhaps to hear and meet their lovers too;  
The Julias, tender souls! the Henrys kind  
and true:

There she expected plottings to detect,  
And—but I know not what she might expect—  
All she was taught in books to be her guide,  
And all that nature taught the nymph beside.

'Now that good dame had in the castle dwelt  
So long that she for all its people felt;  
She kept her sundry keys, and ruled o'er all,  
Female and male, domestics in the hall;  
By her lord trusted, worthy of her trust,  
Proud but obedient, bountiful but just.

'She praised her lucky stars, that in her  
place

She never found neglect, nor felt disgrace;  
To do her duty was her soul's delight,  
This her inferiors would to theirs excite,  
This her superiors notice and requite;  
To either class she gave the praises due,  
And still more grateful as more favour'd grew:  
Her lord and lady were of peerless worth,  
In power unmatched, in glory and in birth;  
And such the virtue of the noble race,  
It reach'd the meanest servant in the place;  
All, from the chief attendant on my lord  
To the groom's helper, had her civil word;  
From Miss Montregor, who the ladies taught,  
To the rude lad who in the garden wrought;  
From the first favourite to the meanest drudge,  
Were no such women, heaven should be her  
judge;

Whatever stains were theirs, let them reside  
In that pure place, and they were mundified;  
The sun of favour on their vileness shone,  
And all their faults like morning mists were  
gone.

'There was Lord Robert! could she have  
her choice,  
From the world's masters he should have her  
voice;

So kind and gracious in his noble ways,  
It was a pleasure speaking in his praise:  
And Lady Catharine,—O! a prince's pride  
Might by one smile of hers be gratified;  
With her would monarchs all their glory  
share,

And in her presence banish all their care.

'Such was the matron, and to her the maid  
Was by her lover carefully convey'd.

'When William first the invitation read  
It some displeasure in his spirit bred,

Not that one jealous thought the man  
possess'd,

He was by fondness, not by fear distress'd;  
But when his Fanny to his mind convey'd  
The growing treasures of the ancient maid,  
The thirty years, come June, of service past,  
Her lasting love, her life that would not last;  
Her power! her place! what interest! what  
respect

She had acquiesc'd—and shall we her neglect?

"No, Frances, no!" he answer'd, "you  
are right;

But things appear in such a different light!"

'Her parents blest her, and as well became  
Their love advised her, that they might not  
blame;

They said, "If she should e'er or countess  
meet

She should be humble, cautious, and discreet;  
Humble, but not abased, remembering all  
Are kindred sinners,—children of the fall;  
That from the earth our being we receive,  
And are all equal when the earth we leave."

'They then advised her in a modest way  
To make replies to what my lord might say;  
Her aunt would aid her, who was now become  
With nobles noble, and with lords at home.

'So went the pair; and William told at night  
Of a reception gracious and polite;  
He spake of galleries long and pictures tall,  
The handsome parlours, the prodigious hall;  
The busts, the statues, and the floors of stone,  
The storied arras, and the vast saloon,  
In which was placed an Indian chest and  
screen,

With figures such as he had never seen:  
He told of these as men enraptured tell,  
And gave to all their praise, and all was well.

'Left by the lover, the desponding maid  
Was of the matron's ridicule afraid;  
But when she heard a welcome frank and kind,  
The wonted firmness reposc'd her mind;  
Pleased by the looks of love her aunt display'd,  
Her fond professions, and her kind parade.

'In her own room, and with her niece apart,  
She gave up all the secrets of her heart;  
And, grown familiar, bid her Fanny come,  
Partake her cheer, and make herself at home.

'Shut in that room, upon its cheerful board  
She laid the comforts of no vulgar board;  
Then press'd the damsel both with love and  
pride,

For both she felt—and would not be denied.



Grace she pronounced before and after  
meat,  
And bless'd her God that she could talk and  
eat ;

Then with new glee she sang her patron's  
praise—

"He had no paltry arts, no pumping ways ;  
She had the roast and boil'd of every day,  
That sent the poor with grateful hearts away ;  
And she was grateful—Come, my darling,  
think

Of them you love the best, and let us drink."

And now she drank the healths of those  
above,

Her noble friends, whom she must ever love ;  
But not together, not the young and old,  
But one by one, the number duly told ;  
And told their merits too—there was not one  
Who had not said a gracious thing or done ;  
Nor could she praise alone, but she would take  
A cheerful glass for every favourite's sake,  
And all were favourites—till the rosy cheek  
Spoke for the tongue that nearly ceased to  
speak ;

That rosy cheek that now began to shine,  
And show the progress of the rosy wine :  
But there she ended—felt the singing head,  
Then pray'd as custom will'd, and so to bed.

The morn was pleasant, and the ancient  
maid

With her fair niece about the mansion stray'd ;  
There was no room without th' appropriate  
tale

Of blood and murder, female sprite or male ;  
There was no picture that th' historic dame  
Pass'd by and gave not its peculiar fame ;  
The births, the visits, weddings, burials, all  
That chanced for ages at the noble Hall.

"These and each revolution she could state,  
And give strange anecdotes of love and hate ;  
This was her first delight, her pride, her boast,  
She told of many an heiress, many a toast,  
Of Lady Ellen's flight, of Lord Orlando's ghost ;  
The maid turn'd pale, and what should then  
ensue

But wine and cake—the dame was frighten'd  
too.

The aunt and niece now walk'd about the  
grounds,

And sometimes met the gentry in their rounds ;  
"Do let us turn !" the timid girl exclaim'd—

"Turn !" said the aunt, "of what are you  
ashamed ?

What is there frightful in such looks as those ?  
What is it, child, you fancy or suppose ?

Look at Lord Robert, see if you can trace  
More than true honour in that handsome face !

"What ! you must think, by blushing in  
that way,

My lord has something about love to say  
But I assure you that he never spoke  
Such things to me in earnest or in joke,  
And yet I meet him in all sorts of times,  
When wicked men are thinking of their crimes.

"There ! let them pass—Why, yes, in-  
deed 'tis true

That was a look, and was design'd for you ;  
But what the wonder when the sight is new ?  
For my lord's virtue you may take my word,  
He would not do a thing that was absurd."

A month had pass'd ; "And when will  
Fanny come ?"

The lover ask'd, and found the parents dumb ;  
They had not heard for more than half the  
space,

And the poor maiden was in much disgrace ;  
Silence so long they could not understand,  
And this of one who wrote so neat a hand  
Their sister sure would send were aught amiss,  
But youth is thoughtless—there is hope in  
this.

As time elapsed, their wonder changed to  
wo,

William would lose another day, and go ;  
Yet if she should be wilful and remain,  
He had no power to take her home again :  
But he would go :—He went, and he return'd,—  
And in his look the pair his tale discern'd ;  
Stupid in grief, it seem'd not that he knew  
How he came home, or what he should pursue :  
Fanny was gone !—her aunt was sick in bed,  
Dying, she said—none cared if she were dead ;  
Her charge, his darling, was decoy'd, was fled !  
But at what time, and whither, and with  
whom,

None seem'd to know—all surly, shy, or dumb.

Each blamed himself, all blamed the erring  
maid,

They vow'd revenge ; they cursed their fate,  
and pray'd.

Moved by his grief, the father sought the  
place,

Ask'd for his girl, and talk'd of her disgrace ;  
Spoke of the villain, on whose cursed head

He pray'd that vengeance might be amply  
shed ;

Then sought his sister, and beheld her grief,  
Her pain, her danger,—this was no relief.

“Where is my daughter? bring her to my sight!”

“Brother, I’m rack’d and tortured day and night.”

“Talk not to me! What grief have you to tell,  
Is your soul rack’d, or is your bosom hell?  
Where is my daughter?”—“She would take  
her oath

For their right doing, for she knew them both,  
And my young lord was honour.”—“Woman,  
cease!

And give your guilty conscience no such  
peace—

You’ve sold the wretched girl, you have  
betray’d your niece.”

“The Lord be good! and O! the pains that  
come

In limb and body—Brother, get you home!  
Your voice runs through me,—every angry  
word,

If he should hear it, would offend my lord.

“Has he a daughter? let her run away  
With a poor dog, and hear what he will say!  
No matter what, I’ll ask him for his son”

“And so offend? Now, brother, pray begone!”

‘My lord appear’d, perhaps by pity moved,  
And kindly said he no such things approved;  
Nay, he was angry with the foolish boy,  
Who might his pleasures at his ease enjoy;  
The thing was wrong—he hoped the farm did  
well,—

The angry father doom’d the farm to hell;  
He then desired to see the villain-son,  
Though my lord warn’d him such excess to  
shun;

Told him he pardon’d, though he blamed such  
rage,

And bade him think upon his state and age.

“Think! yes, my lord! but thinking drives  
me mad—

Give me my child!—Where is she to be had?  
I’m old and poor, but I with both can feel,  
And so shall he that could a daughter steal!  
Think you, my lord, I can be so bereft  
And feel no vengeance for the villain’s theft?  
Old if I am, could I the robber meet  
I’d lay his breathless body at my feet—  
Was that a smile, my lord? think you your boy  
Will both the father and the child destroy?”

‘My lord replied—“I’m sorry from my soul!  
But boys are boys, and there is no control.”

“So, for your great ones Justice slumbers  
then!

If men are poor they must not feel as men—  
Will your son marry?”—“Marry!” said my  
lord,

“Your daughter?—marry—no, upon my  
word!”

“What then, our stations differ!—but your  
son

Thought not of that—his crime has made  
them one,

In guilt united—She shall be his wife,  
Or I th’ avenger that will take his life!”

“Old man, I pity and forgive you; rest  
In hope and comfort,—be not so distress’d,  
Things that seem bad oft happen for the best;  
The girl has done no more than thousands do,  
Nor has the boy—they laugh at me and you.”—  
“And this my vengeance—curse him!”—

“Nay, forbear;  
I spare your frenzy, in compassion spare.”

“Spare me, my lord! and what have I to  
dread?

O! spare not, heaven, the thunder o’er his  
head—

The bolt he merits!”—

Such was his redress;

And he return’d to brood upon distress.

‘And what of William?—William from the  
time

Appear’d partaker both of grief and crime;  
He cared for nothing, nothing he pursued,  
But walk’d about in melancholy mood;  
He ceased to labour,—all he loved before  
He now neglected, and would see no more;  
He said his flute brought only to his mind  
When he was happy, and his Fanny kind;  
And his loved walks, and every object near,  
And every evening-sound she loved to hear,  
The shady lane, broad heath, and starry sky,  
Brought home reflections, and he wish’d to die:  
Yet there he stray’d, because he wish’d to shun  
The world he hated, where his part was done;  
As if, though lingering on the earth, he there  
Had neither hope nor calling, tie nor care.

‘At length a letter from the daughter came,  
“Frances” subscribed, and that the only  
name;

She “pitied much her parents, spoke of fate,  
And begg’d them to forget her, not to hate;  
Said she had with her all the world could give,  
And only pray’d that they in peace should  
live,—

That which is done, is that we're born to do,  
This she was taught, and she believed it  
true ;

True, that she lived in pleasure and delight,  
But often dream'd and saw the farm by night ;  
The board'd room that she had kept so neat,  
And all her roses in the window-seat ;  
The pear-tree shade, the jasmine's lovely  
gloom,

With its long twigs that blossom'd in the  
room ;

But she was happy, and the tears that fell  
As she was writing had no grief to tell ;  
We weep when we are glad, we sigh when we  
are well."

' A bill inclosed, that they beheld with pain  
And indignation, they return'd again ;

There was no mention made of William's  
name,

Check'd as she was by pity, love, and shame.

' William, who wrought for bread, and never  
sought

More than the day demanded when he  
wrought,

Was to a sister call'd, of all his race  
The last, and dying in a distant place ;  
In tender terror he approach'd her bed,  
Beheld her sick, and buried her when dead :  
He was her heir, and what she left was more  
Than he required, who was content before.  
With their minds' sufferings, age, and growing  
pain,

That ancient couple could not long remain,  
Nor long remain'd ; and in their dying groan  
The suffering youth perceived himself alone ;  
For of his health or sickness, peace or care,  
He knew not one in all the world to share ;  
Now every scene would sad reflections give,  
And most his home, and there he could not  
live ;

There every walk would now distressing prove,  
And of his loss remind him, and his love.

' With the small portion by his sister left  
He roved about as one of peace bereft,  
And by the body's movements hoped to find  
A kind of wearied stillness in the mind,  
And sooner bring it to a sleepy state,  
As rocking infants will their pains abate.

' Thus careless, lost, unheeding where he  
went,

Nine weary years the wandering lover spent.

' His sole employment, all that could amuse,  
Was his companions on the road to choose ;

With such he travell'd through the passing  
day,

Friends of the hour, and walkers by the way ;  
And from the sick, the poor, the halt, the  
blind,

He learn'd the sorrows of his suffering kind.

' He learn'd of many how unjust their fate,  
For their connexions dwelt in better state ;  
They had relations famous, great or rich,  
Learned or wise, they never scrupled which ;  
But while they cursed these kindred churls,  
would try

To build their fame, and for their glory lie.

' Others delighted in misfortunes strange,  
The sports of fortune in her love for change.

' Some spoke of wonders they before had  
seen,

When on their travels they had wandering  
been ;

How they had sail'd the world about, and  
found

The sailing plain, although the world was  
round ;

How they beheld for months th' unsettling sun  
What deeds they saw ! what they themselves  
had done !—

What leaps at Rhodes!—what glory then they  
won !

' There were who spoke in terms of high  
disdain

Of their contending against power in vain,  
Suffering from tyranny of law long borne,  
And life's best spirits in contentions worn :  
Happy in this, th' oppressors soon will die,  
Each with the vex'd and suffering man to  
lie—

And thus consoled exclaim, " And is not  
sorrow dry ? "

' But vice offended : when he met with those  
Who could a deed of violence propose,  
And cry, " Should they what we desire  
possess ?

Should they deprive us, and their laws  
oppress ? "

William would answer, " Ours is not re-  
dress : "

" Would you oppression then for ever feel ? "

" 'Tis not my choice ; but yet I must not  
steal : "

" So, first they cheat us, and then make their  
laws

To guard their treasures and to back their  
cause :

What call you then, my friend, the rights of man ? ”—

“ To get his bread,” said William, “ if he can ; And if he cannot, he must then depend Upon a Being he may make his friend : ”—  
“ Make ! ” they replied ; and conference had end.

‘ But female vagrants would at times express A new-born pleasure at the mild address ; His modest wish, clothed in accent meek, That they would comfort in religion seek.

“ I am a sinful being ! ” William cried ;  
“ Then, what am I ? ” the conscious heart replied :

And oft-times ponder’d in a pensive way,  
“ He is not happy, yet he loves to pray.”

‘ But some would freely on his thoughts intrude,  
And thrust themselves ’twixt him and solitude :

They would his faith and of its strength demand,

And all his soul’s prime motions understand ;  
How ! they would say, such wo and such belief,

Such trust in heaven, and yet on earth such grief !

Thou art almost, my friend,—thou art not all,  
Thou hast not yet the self-destroying call ;  
Thou hast a carnal wish, perhaps a will  
Not yet subdued,—the root is growing still :  
There is the strong man yet that keeps his own,

Who by a stronger must be overthrown ;  
There is the burden that must yet be gone,  
And then the pilgrim may go singing on.

‘ William to this would seriously incline,  
And to their comforts would his heart resign ;  
It soothed, it raised him,—he began to feel  
Th’ enlivening warmth of methodistic zeal ;  
He learn’d to know the brethren by their looks—

He sought their meetings, he perused their books ;

But yet was not within the pale and yoke,  
And as a novice of experience spoke ;  
But felt the comfort, and began to pray  
For such companions on the king’s highway.

‘ William had now across the kingdom sped,  
To th’ Eastern ocean from St. David’s head ;  
And wandering late, with various thoughts oppress’d,

’Twas midnight ere he reach’d his place of rest,—

A village inn, that one way-faring friend  
Could from experience safely recommend,  
Where the kind hostess would be more intent  
On what he needed than on what he spent ;  
Her husband, once a heathen, she subdued,  
And with religious fear his mind imbued ;  
Though his conviction came too late to save  
An erring creature from an early grave.

‘ Since that event, the cheerful widow grew  
In size and substance,—her the brethren knew—

And many friends were hers, and lovers not a few ;

But either love no more could warm her heart,  
Or no man came who could the warmth impart.

‘ William drew near, and saw the comely look  
Of the good lady, bending o’er her book ;  
Hymns it appear’d,—for now a pleasing sound  
Seem’d as a welcome in his wanderings found :  
He enter’d softly, not as they who think  
That they may act the ruffian if they drink,  
And who conceive, that for their paltry pence  
They may with rules of decency dispense ;  
Far unlike these was William,—he was kind,  
Exactng nothing, and to all resign’d.

‘ He saw the hostess reading,—and their eyes  
Met in good will, and something like surprise :  
It was not beauty William saw, but more,  
Something like that which he had loved before—

Something that brought his Fanny to his view,

In the dear time when she was good and true ;  
And his, it seem’d, were features that were seen

With some emotion—she was not serene :  
And both were moved to ask what looks like those could mean.

At first she colour’d to the deepest red,  
That hurried off, till all the rose was fled ;  
She call’d a servant, whom she sent to rest,  
Then made excuse to her attentive guest ;  
She own’d the thoughts confused,—’twas very true,

He brought a dear departed friend in view :  
Then, as he listen’d, bade him welcome there  
With livelier looks and more engaging air,  
And stirr’d the fire of ling, and brush’d the wicker chair,

Waiting his order with the cheerful look,  
That proved how pleasant were the pains she took.

'He was refresh'd—They spake on various themes—

Our early pleasures, Reason's first-drawn schemes,

Youth's strong illusions, Love's delirious dreams :

Then from her book he would presume to ask

A song of praise, and she perform'd the task :

The clock struck twelve—He started—"Must I go ?"

His looks spoke plainly, and the lady's, "No :"  
So down he sat,—and when the clock struck one

There was no start, no effort to be gone :  
Nor stay'd discourse—

"And so your loves were cross'd,  
And the loved object to your wishes lost ?

But was she faithless, or were you to blame ?  
I wish I knew her—Will you tell her name ?"

"Excuse me—that would hurt her if alive ;  
And, if no more, why should her fault survive ?"

"But love you still ?"—

"Alas ! I feel I do,  
When I behold her very looks in you !"

"Yet, if the frail one's name must not be known,

My friendly guest may trust me with his own."

"This done, the lady paused, and then replied—

"It grieves me much to see your spirit tried ;—  
But she was like me,—how I came to know  
The lamb that stray'd I will hereafter show ;—  
We were indeed as sisters—Should I state  
Her quiet end, you would no longer hate :  
I see your heart,—and I shall quickly prove,  
Though she deserved not, yet she prized your love :

Long as she breathed was heard her William's name—

And such affection half absolves her shame.

"Weep not, but hear me, how I came to know  
Thee and thy Frances—this to heaven I owe ;

And thou shalt view the pledge, the very ring,

The birth-day token—well you know the thing ;

'This,' if I ever—thus I was to speak,  
As she had spoken—but I see you weak :  
She was not worthy—"

"O ! you cannot tell

By what accursed means my Fanny fell !  
What bane, compulsion, threats—for she was pure ;

But from such toils what being is secure ?

Force, not persuasion, robb'd me—"

"You are right ;

So has she told me, in her Maker's sight :

She loved not vice—"

"O ! no,—her heart approved

All that her God commanded to be loved ;

And she is gone—"

"Consider ! death alone

Could for the errors of her life atone."

"Speak not of them ; I would she knew  
how dear

I hold her yet !—But dost thou give the tear

To my loved Frances ?—No ! I cannot part

With one who has her face, who has her heart ;

With looks so pleasing, when I thee behold,  
She lives—that bosom is no longer cold—

Then tell me—Art thou not—in pity speak—  
One whom I sought, while living meant to seek—

Art thou my Fanny ?—Let me not offend—  
Be something to me—be a sufferer's friend—

Be more—be all !—The precious truth confess—

Art thou not Frances ?—"

"O, my William ! yes !

But spare me, spare thyself, and suffer less :

In my best days, the spring-time of my life,

I was not worthy to be William's wife ;

A widow now—not poor, indeed—not cast

In outer darkness—sorrowing for the past,

And for the future hoping—but no more :

Let me the pledges of thy love restore,

And give the ring thou gavest—let it be

A token still of my regard for thee,—

But only that,—and to a worthier now

Consign the gift."

"The only worthy thou !"

Replied the lover ; and what more express'd

May be omitted—here our tale shall rest.

'This pair, our host and hostess of the

Fleece,

Command some wealth, and smile at its

increase ;

Saving and civil, cautious and discreet,

All sects and parties in their mansion meet ;

There from their chapels teachers go to share  
The creature-comforts,—mockery grins not  
there ;

There meet the wardens at their annual feast,  
With annual pun—"the parish must be  
fleeced ;"

There traders find a parlour cleanly swept  
For their reception, and in order kept ;

And there the sons of labour, poor, but free,  
Sit and enjoy their hour of liberty.

'So live the pair,—and life's disasters  
seem

In their unruffled calm a troubled dream ;  
In comfort runs the remnant of their life—  
He the fond husband, she the faithful  
wife.'

## BOOK XX. THE CATHEDRAL-WALK

George in his hypochondriac State—A Family  
Mansion now a Farm-house—The Company  
there — Their Conversation — Subjects  
afforded by the Pictures—Doubts if Spirits  
can appear—Arguments—Facts—The Re-  
lation of an old Lady—Her Walks in  
a Cathedral—Appearance there.

IN their discourse again the Brothers dwelt  
On early subjects—what they once had felt,  
Once thought of things mysterious ;—themes  
that all

With some degree of reverence recall.

George then reverted to the days of old,  
When his heart fainted, and his hope was  
cold ;

When by the power of fancy he was sway'd,  
And every impulse of the mind obey'd.

'Then, my dear Richard,' said the 'Squire,  
'my case

Was call'd consumptive—I must seek a place  
And soil salubrious, thither must repair,  
And live on asses' milk and milder air.

'My uncle bought a farm, and on the  
land

The fine old mansion yet was left to stand,  
Not in this state, but old and much decay'd ;  
Of this a part was habitable made ;

The rest—who doubts ?—was by the spirits  
seized,

Ghosts of all kinds, who used it as they  
pleased.

'The worthy farmer tenant yet remain'd,  
Of good report—he had a fortune gain'd ;  
And his three daughters at their school  
acquired

The air and manner that their swains  
admired ;

The mother-gossip and these daughters three  
Talk'd of genteel and social company,

And while the days were fine, and walks were  
clean,

A fresh assemblage day by day were seen.

'There were the curate's gentle maids, and  
some

From all the neighbouring villages would  
come ;

There, as I stole the yew-tree shades among,  
I saw the parties walking, old and young,

Where I was nothing—if perceived, they said,  
"The man is harmless, be not you afraid ;

A poor young creature, who, they say, is  
cross'd

In love, and has in part his senses lost ;  
His health for certain, and he comes to spend

His time with us ; we hope our air will mend  
A frame so weaken'd, for the learned tribe

A change of air for stubborn ills prescribe ;  
And doing nothing often has prevail'd

When ten physicians have prescribed and  
fail'd ;

Not that for air or change there 's much to say,  
But nature then has time to take her way ;

And so we hope our village will restore  
This man to health that he possess'd before.

He loves the garden avenues, the gloom  
Of the old chambers, of the tap'stried room,

And we no notice take, we let him go and  
come."

'So spake a gay young damsel ; but she  
knew

Not all the truth,—in part her tale was true.  
Much it amused me in the place to be

This harmless cypher, seeming not to see,  
Yet seeing all,—unnoticed to appear,

Yet noting all ; and not disposed to hear,  
But to go forth,—break in on one's plan,

And hear them speak of the forsaken man.

'In scenes like these, a mansion so decay'd,  
With blighted trees in hoary moss array'd,

And ivy'd walls around, for many an hour  
I walk'd alone, and felt their witching power ;  
So others felt ;—the young of either sex  
Would in these walks their timid minds  
perplex

By meeting terrors, and the old appear'd,  
Their fears upbraiding, like the young who  
fear'd ;

Among them all some sad discourse at night  
Was sure to breed a terrified delight ;  
Some luckless one of the attentive dames  
Had figures seen like those within the frames,  
Figures of lords who once the land possess'd,  
And who could never in their coffins rest ;  
Unhappy spirits ! who could not abide  
The loss of all their consequence and pride,  
'Twas death in all his power, their very names  
had died.

' These tales of terror views terrific bred,  
And sent the hearers trembling to their bed.'

' In an autumnal evening, cool and still,  
The sun just dropp'd beneath a distant hill,  
The children gazing on the quiet scene,  
Then rose in glory Night's majestic queen ;  
And pleasant was the chequer'd light and  
shade

Her golden beams and maple shadows made ;  
An ancient tree that in the garden grew,  
And that fair picture on the gravel threw.

' Then all was silent, save the sounds that  
make  
Silence more awful, while they faintly break ;  
The frighten'd bat's low shriek, the beetle's  
hum,

With nameless sounds we know not whence  
they come.

' Such was the evening ; and that ancient seat  
The scene where then some neighbours chanced  
to meet ;

Up to the door led broken steps of stone,  
Whose dewy surface in the moonlight shone ;  
On vegetation, that with progress slow  
Where man forbears to fix his foot, will grow ;  
The window's depth and dust repell'd the ray  
Of the moon's light and of the setting day ;  
Pictures there were, and each display'd a face  
And form that gave their sadness to the place ;  
The frame and canvas show'd that worms  
unseen,

Save in their works, for years had working  
been ;

A fire of brushwood on the irons laid  
All the dull room in fitful views display'd,  
And with its own wild light in fearful forms  
array'd.

' In this old Hall, in this departing day,  
Assembled friends and neighbours, grave and  
gay,

When one good lady at a picture threw  
A glance that caused inquiry—"Tell us who?"

"That was a famous warrior; one, they said,  
That by a spirit was awhile obey'd ;

In all his dreadful battles he would say,  
' Or win or lose, I shall escape to-day ;'

And though the shot as thick as hail came  
round,

On no occasion he received a wound ;  
He stood in safety, free from all alarm,

Protected, heaven forgive him, by his charm :  
But he forgot the date, till came the hour

When he no more had the protecting power ;  
And then he bade his friends around farewell !

' I fall !' he cried, and in the instant fell.  
' Behold those infants in the frame beneath !

A witch offended wrought their early death ;  
She form'd an image, made as wax to melt,

And each the wasting of the figure felt ;  
The hag confess'd it when she came to die,  
And no one living can the truth deny.

"But see a beauty in King William's days,  
With that long waist, and those enormous

stays ;  
She had three lovers, and no creature knew  
The one prefer'd, or the discarded two ;

None could the secret of her bosom see ;  
Loving, poor maid, th' attention of the three,

She kept such equal weight in either scale,  
'Twas hard to say who would at last prevail ;

Thus you may think in either heart arose  
A jealous anger, and the men were foes ;

Each with himself concluded, two aside,  
The third may make the lovely maid his

bride :  
This caused their fate—it was on Thursday

night  
The deed was done, and bloody was the fight ;  
Just as she went, poor thoughtless girl ! to

prayers,  
Ran wild the maid with horror up the stairs ;  
Pale as a ghost, but not a word she said,

And then the lady utter'd, ' Coates is dead !'  
' Then the poor damsel found her voice and

cried,  
' Ran through the body, and that instant died !

But he pronounced your name, and so was satisfied.'

A second fell, and he who did survive  
Was kept by skill and sovereign drugs alive;  
'O! would she see me!' he was heard to say,

'No! I'll torment him to his dying day!' The maid exclaim'd, and every Thursday night

Her spirit came his wretched soul to fright;  
Once as she came he cried aloud 'Forgive!' 'Never!' she answer'd, 'never while you live,

Nor when you die, as long as time endures;  
You have my torment been, and I'll be yours!'

That is the lady, and the man confess'd  
Her vengeful spirit would not let him rest."

"But are there ghosts?" exclaim'd a timid maid;

"My father tells me not to be afraid;  
He cries 'When buried we are safe enough,  
And calls such stories execrable stuff."

"Your father, child," the former lady cried,  
"Has learning much, but he has too much pride;

It is impossible for him to tell  
What things in nature are impossible,  
Or out of nature, or to prove to whom  
Or for what purposes a ghost may come;  
It may not be intelligence to bring,  
But to keep up a notion of the thing;  
And though from one such fact there may arise  
An hundred wild improbabilities,  
Yet had there never been the truth, I say,  
The very lies themselves had died away."

"True," said a friend; "Heaven doubtless may dispense

A kind of dark and clouded evidence;  
God has not promised that he will not send  
A spirit freed to either foe or friend;  
He may such proof, and only such bestow,  
Though we the certain truth can never know;  
And therefore though such floating stories bring

No strong or certain vouchers of the thing,  
Still would I not, presuming, pass my word  
That all such tales were groundless and absurd"

"But you will grant," said one who sate beside,

"That all appear so when with judgment tried?"

"For that concession, madam, you may call,  
When we have safe in judgment upon all."

'An ancient lady, who with pensive smile  
Had heard the stories, and been mute the while,

Now said, "Our prudence had been better shown

By leaving uncontested things unknown;  
Yet if our children must such stories hear,  
Let us provide some antidotes to fear;  
For all such errors in the minds of youth,  
In any mind, the only cure is truth;  
And truths collected may in time decide  
Upon such facts, or prove, at least, a guide:  
If then permitted I will fairly state  
One fact, nor doubt the story I relate;  
I for your perfect acquiescence call,  
'Tis of myself I tell."—"O! tell us all!"  
Said every being there: then silent was the Hall.

"Early in life, beneath my parent's roof,  
Of man's true honour I had noble proof;  
A generous lover who was worthy found,  
Where half his sex are hollow and unsound.

"My father fail'd in trade, and sorrowing died,

When all our loss a generous youth supplied;  
And soon the time drew on when he could say,  
'O! fix the happy, fix the early day!'  
Nor meant I to oppose his wishes, or delay:  
But then came fever, slight at first indeed,  
Then hastening on and threatening in its speed;

It mock'd the power of medicine; day by day  
I saw those helpers sadly walk away;  
So came the hand-like cloud, and with such power

And with such speed, that brought the mighty shower.

"Him nursed I dying, and we freely spoke  
Of what might follow the expected stroke;  
We talk'd of spirits, of their unknown powers,  
And dared to dwell on what the fate of ours;  
But the dread promise, to appear again,  
Could it be done, I sought not to obtain;  
But yet we were presuming—"Could it be,"  
He said, 'O Emma! I would come to thee!'

"At his last hour his reason, late astray,  
Again return'd t' illuminate his way.

"In the last night my mother long had kept  
Unwearied watch, and now reclined and slept;



The nurse was dreaming in a distant chair,  
And I had knelt to soothe him with a prayer;  
When, with a look of that peculiar kind  
That gives its purpose to the fellow mind,  
His manner spoke—"Confide—he not  
afraid—

I shall remember,"—this was all convey'd,—  
'I know not what awaits departed man,  
But this believe—I meet thee if I can.'

"I wish'd to die,—and grief, they say, will  
kill,

But you perceive 'tis slowly if it will;  
That I was wretched you may well believe—  
I judged it right, and was resolved to grieve:  
I lost my mother when there lived not one,  
Man, woman, child, whom I would seek or  
shun.

"The Dean, my uncle, with congenial gloom,  
Said, 'Will you share a melancholy home?'  
For he bewail'd a wife, as I deplored  
My fate, and bliss that could not be restored.

"In his cathedral's gloom I pass'd my time,  
Much in devotion, much in thought sublime;  
There oft I paced the aisles, and watch'd the  
glow

Of the sun setting on the stones below,  
And saw the failing light, that strove to pass  
Through the dim coating of the storied glass,  
Nor fell within, but till the day was gone  
The red faint fire upon the window shone.

"I took the key, and oft-times chose to  
stay

Till all was vanish'd of the tedious day,  
Till I perceived no light, nor heard a sound,  
That gave me notice of a world around.

"Then had I grief's proud thoughts, and  
said, in tone

Of exultation, 'World, I am alone!  
I care not for thee, thou art vile and base,  
And I shall leave thee for a nobler place.'

"So I the world abused,—in fact, to me  
Urbane and civil as a world could be:  
Nor should romantic grievance thus complain,  
Although but little in the world they gain,  
But let them think if they have nothing done  
To make this odious world so sad a one,  
Or what their worth and virtue that should  
make

This graceless world so pleasant for their sake.

"But to my tale:—Behold me as I tread  
The silent mansions of the favour'd dead,

Who sleep in vaulted chambers, till their clay  
In quiet dissolution melts away  
In this their bodies' home—The spirits, where  
are they?

'And where *his* spirit?—Doors and walls  
impede

The embodied spirit, not the spirit freed:  
And, saying this, I at the altar knelt,  
And painful joys and rapturous anguish felt;  
Till strong, bold hopes possess'd me, and I  
cried,

'Even at this instant is he at my side;  
Yes, now, dear spirit! art thou by to prove  
That mine is lasting, mine the loyal love!

"Thus have I thought, returning to the  
Dean,

As one who had some glorious vision seen:  
He ask'd no question, but would sit and  
weep,

And cry, in doleful tone, 'I cannot sleep!'

"In dreams the chosen of my heart I view'd,  
And thus th' impression day by day renew'd;  
I saw him always, always loved to see,  
For when alone he was my company:  
In company with him alone I seem'd,  
And, if not dreaming, was as one who dream'd.

"Thus, robb'd of sleep, I found, when  
evening came,

A pleasing torpor steal upon my frame;  
But still the habit drew my languid feet  
To the loved darkness of the favourite seat;  
And there, by silence and by sadness press'd,  
I felt a world my own, and was at rest.

"One night, when urged with more than  
usual zeal,

And feeling all that such enthusiasts feel,  
I paced the altar by, the pillars round,  
And knew no terror in the sacred ground;  
For mine were thoughts that banish'd all such  
fear,—

I wish'd, I long'd to have that form appear;  
And, as I paced the sacred aisles, I cried,  
'Let not thy Emma's spirit be denied  
The sight of thine; or, if I may not see,  
Still by some token let her certain be!'

"At length the anxious thoughts my  
strength subdued,

And sleep o'erpower'd me in my solitude;  
Then was I dreaming of unearthly race,  
The glorious inmates of a blessed place;  
Where lofty minds celestial views explore,  
Heaven's bliss enjoy, and heaven's great  
King adore;

Himthere I sought whom I had loved so well—  
For sure he dwelt where happy spirits dwell !

“ While thus engaged, I started at a sound,  
Of what I knew not, but I look’d around ;  
For I was borne on visionary wings,  
And felt no dread of sublimary things ;  
But rising, walk’d—A distant window threw  
A weak, soft light, that help’d me in my view ;  
Something with anxious heart I hoped to see,  
And pray’d, ‘ O ! God of all things, let it be !  
For all are thine, were made by thee, and thou  
Canst both the meeting and the means allow ;  
Thou canst make clear my sight, or thou canst  
make

More gross the form that his loved mind shall  
take,

Canst clothe his spirit for my fleshly sight,  
Or make my earthly sense more pure and  
bright.”

“ So was I speaking, when without a sound  
There was a movement in the sacred ground :  
I saw a figure rising, but could trace  
No certain features, no peculiar face ;  
But I prepared my mind that form to view,  
Nor felt a doubt,—he promised, and was true !  
I should embrace his angel, and my clay,  
And what was mortal in me, melt away.

“ O ! that ecstatic horror in my frame,  
That o’er me thus, a favour’d mortal, came !  
Bless’d beyond mortals,—and the body now  
I judged would perish, though I knew not  
how ;

The gracious power around me could translate  
And make me pass to that immortal state :  
Thus shall I pay the debt that must be paid,  
And dying live, nor be by death delay’d ;  
And when so changed, I should with joy  
sustain

The heavenly converse, and with him remain.

“ I saw the distant shade, and went with awe,  
But not with terror, to the form I saw ;  
Yet slowly went, for he I did believe  
Would meet, and soul to soul his friend  
receive ;

So on I drew, concluding in my mind,  
I cannot judge what laws may spirits bind ;  
Though I dissolve, and mingle with the blest,  
I am a new and uninstructed guest,  
And ere my love can speak, he should be first  
address’d.

“ Thus I began to speak,—my new-born  
pride,  
My love, and daring hope, the words supplied.

“ “ Dear, happy shade ! companion of the  
good,

The just, the pure, do I on thee intrude ?  
Art thou not come my spirit to improve,  
To form, instruct, and fit me for thy love,  
And, as in love we parted, to restore  
The blessing lost, and then to part no more ?  
Let me with thee in thy pure essence dwell,  
Nor go to bid them of my house farewell,  
But thine be ever ! ’—How shall I relate  
Th’ event that finish’d this ecstatic state ?  
Yet let me try.—It turn’d, and I beheld  
An hideous form, that hope and zeal expell’d :  
In a dim light the horrid shape appear’d,  
That wisdom would have fled, and courage  
fear’d,

Pale, and yet bloated, with distorted eyes  
Distant and deep, a mouth of monstrous  
size,

That would in day’s broad glare a simple  
maid surprise :

He heard my words, and cried, with savage  
shout,

‘ Bah !—bother !—blarney !—What is this  
about ? ’

“ Love, lover, longing, in an instant fled,—  
Now I had vice and impudence to dread ;  
And all my high-wrought fancies died away  
To woman’s trouble, terror, and dismay.

“ ‘ What,’ said the wretch, ‘ what is it  
you would have ? ’

Would’st hang a man for peeping in a grave ?  
Search me yourself, and try if you can feel  
Aught I have taken,—there was nought to  
steal :

’Twas told they buried with the corpse enough  
To pay the hazard,—I have made the proof,  
Nor gain’d a tester—What I tell is true ;  
But I’m no fool, to be betray’d by you,—  
I’ll hazard nothing, curse me if I do ! ’

“ The light increased, and plainly now  
appear’d

A knavish fool whom I had often fear’d,  
But hid the dread ; and I resolved at least  
Not to expose it to the powerful beast.

“ ‘ Come, John,’ I said, suppressing fear  
and doubt,

‘ Walk on before, and let a lady out ! ’—

‘ Lady ! ’ the wretch replied, with savage  
grin,

‘ Apply to him that let the lady in :

What ! you would go, I take it, to the Dean,  
And tell him what your ladyship has seen.’

“When thus the fool exposed the knave,  
I saw  
The means of holding such a mind in awe,  
And gain my safety by his dread of law.  
‘Alas!’ I cried, ‘I fear the Dean like you,  
For I transgress, and am in trouble too :  
If it be known that we are here, as sure  
As here we are we must the law endure :  
Each other’s counsel therefore let us keep,  
And each steal homeward to our beds and  
sleep.’  
“‘Steal!’ said the ruffian’s conscience—  
‘Well, agreed ;  
Steal on, and let us to the door proceed :’—

Yet, ere he moved, he stood awhile, and took  
Of my poor form a most alarming look ;  
‘But, hark!’ I cried, and he to move  
began,—  
Escape alone engaged the dreadful man :  
With eager hand I oped the ponderous door—  
The wretch rush’d by me, and was heard no  
more.  
“So I escaped,—and when my dreams  
came on,  
I check’d the madness by the thoughts of  
John :  
Yet say I not what can or cannot be,  
But give the story of my ghost and me.”

## BOOK XXI. SMUGGLERS AND POACHERS

A Widow at the Hall—Inquiry of Richard—  
Relation of two Brothers—Their different  
Character—Disposition—Modes of thinking  
—James a Servant—Robert joins the  
Smugglers—Rachel at the Hall—James  
attached to her—Trade fails—Robert a  
Poacher—Is in Danger—How released—  
James and Rachel—Revenge excited—  
Association formed—Attack resolved—  
Preparation made for Resistance—A Night  
Adventure—Reflections.

THERE was a widow in the village known  
To our good Squire, and he had favour shown  
By frequent bounty—She as usual came,  
And Richard saw the worn and weary frame,  
Pale cheek, and eye subdued, of her whose  
mind  
Was grateful still, and glad a friend to find,  
Though to the world long since and all its  
hopes resign’d :  
Her easy form, in rustic neatness clad,  
Was pleasing still ! but she for ever sad.  
“Deep is her grief ?” said Richard—  
“Truly deep,  
And very still, and therefore seems to sleep ;  
To borrow simile, to paint her woes,  
Theirs, like the river’s motion, seems repose,  
Making no petty murmuring,—settled, slow,  
They never waste, they never overflow.  
Rachel is one of those—for there are some  
Who look for nothing in their days to come,  
No good nor evil, neither hope nor fear,  
Nothing remains or cheerful or severe ;

One day is like the past, the year’s sweet  
prime  
Like the sad fall,—for Rachel heeds not time :  
Nothing remains to agitate her breast,  
Spent is the tempest, and the sky at rest ;  
But while it raged her peace its ruin met,  
And now the sun is on her prospects set ;—  
Leave her, and let us her distress explore,  
She heeds it not—she has been left before.”

‘There were two lads call’d Shelley lither  
brought,  
But whence we know not—it was never sought ;  
Their wandering mother left them, left her  
name,  
And the boys throve and valiant men became :  
Handsome, of more than common size, and  
tall,  
And no one’s kindred, seem’d beloved of all ;  
All seem’d alliance by their deeds to prove,  
And loved the youths who could not claim  
their love.  
‘One was call’d James, the more sedate  
and grave,  
The other Robert—names their neighbours  
gave ;  
They both were brave, but Robert loved to run  
And meet his danger—James would rather  
shun  
The dangerous trial, but whenever tried  
He all his spirit to the act applied.  
‘Robert would aid on any man bestow,  
James would his man and the occasion know ;

For that was quick and prompt—this temperate and slow.

Robert would all things he desired pursue, James would consider what was best to do ; All spoke of Robert as a man they loved, And most of James as valued and approved.

Both had some learning: Robert his acquired By quicker parts, and was by praise inspired ; James, as he was in his acquirements slow, Would learn the worth of what he tried to know.

In fact, this youth was generous—that was just ;

The one you loved, the other you would trust : Yet him you loved you would for truth approve,

And him you trusted you would likewise love.

Such were the brothers—James had found his way

To Nether Hall, and there inclined to stay ; He could himself command, and therefore could obey :

He with the keeper took his daily round, A rival grew, and some unkindness found ; But his superior farm'd ! the place was void, And James guns, dogs, and dignity enjoy'd.

Robert had scorn of service ; he would be A slave to no man—happy were the free, And only they ;—by such opinions led, Robert to sundry kinds of trade was bred ; Nor let us wonder if he sometimes made An active partner in a lawless trade ; Fond of adventure, wanton as the wave, He loved the danger and the law to brave ; But these were chance adventures, known to few,—

Not that the hero cared what people knew.

The brothers met not often—When they met

James talk'd of honest gains and scorn of debt, Of virtuous labour, of a sober life, And what with credit would support a wife. But Robert answer'd—“ How can men advise Who to a master let their tongue and eyes ? Whose words are not their own ? whose foot and hand

Run at a nod, or act upon command ?

Who cannot eat or drink, discourse or play, Without requesting others that they may.

“ Debt you would shun ; but what advice to give

Who owe your service every hour you live !

Let a bell sound, and from your friends you run,

Although the darling of your heart were one ; But if the bondage fits you, I resign

You to your lot—I am content with mine ! ”

Thus would the lads their sentiments express,

And part in earnest, part in playfulness ; Till Love, controller of all hearts and eyes, Breaker of bonds, of friendship's holy ties, Awakener of new wills and slumbering sympathies,

Began his reign,—till Rachel, meek-eyed maid, That form, those cheeks, that faultless face display'd,

That child of gracious nature, ever neat And never fine ; a flowret simply sweet, Seeming at least unconscious she was fair ; Meek in her spirit, timid in her air, And shrinking from his glance if one presumed To come too near the beauty as it bloom'd.

Robert beheld her in her father's cot Day after day, and blest his happy lot ; He look'd indeed, but he could not offend By gentle looks—he was her father's friend : She was accusom'd to that tender look, And frankly gave the hand he fondly took ; She loved his stories, pleas'd she heard him play, Pensive herself, she loved to see him gay, And if they loved not yet, they were in Love's highway.

But Rachel now to womanhood was grown, And would no more her faith and fondness own ; She called her latent prudence to her aid, And grew observant, cautious, and afraid ; She heard relations of her lover's guile, And could believe the danger of his smile : With art insidious rival damsels strove To show how false his speech, how feigned his love ;

And though her heart another story told, Her speech grew cautious, and her manner cold.

Rachel had village fame, was fair and tall, And gain'd a place of credit at the Hall ; Where James beheld her seated in that place, With a child's meekness, and an angel's face ; Her temper soft, her spirit firm, her words Simple—and few as simple truth affords.

James could but love her,—he at church had seen

The tall, fair maid, had met her on the green, Admiring always, nor surprised to find Her figure often present to his mind ; But now he saw her daily, and the sight Gave him new pleasure and increased delight.

'But James, still prudent and reserved,  
though sure

The love he felt was love that would endure,  
Would wait awhile, observing what was fit,  
And meet, and right, nor would himself commit :

Then was he flatter'd,—James in time became  
Rich, both as slayer of the Baron's game,  
And as protector,—not a female dwelt  
In that demesne who had not feign'd or felt  
Regard for James ; and he from all had praise  
Enough a young man's vanity to raise ;  
With all these pleasures he of course must part  
When Rachel reign'd sole empress of his heart.

'Robert was now deprived of that delight  
He once experienced in his mistress' sight ;  
For, though he now his frequent visits paid,  
He saw but little of the cautious maid ;  
The simple common pleasures that he took  
Grew dull, and he the wonted haunts forsook ;  
His flute and song he left, his book and pen,  
And sought the meetings of adventurous men ;  
There was a love-born sadness in his breast,  
That wanted stimulus to bring on rest ;  
These simple pleasures were no more of use,  
And danger only could repose produce ;  
He join'd th' associates in their lawless trade,  
And was at length of their profession made.

'He saw connected with th' adventurous  
crew

Those whom he judged were sober men and  
true ;

He found that some, who should the trade  
prevent,

Gave it by purchase their encouragement ;  
He found that contracts could be made with  
those

Who had their pay these dealers to oppose ;  
And the good ladies whom at church he saw  
With looks devout, of reverence and awe,  
Could change their feelings as they change  
their place,

And, whispering, deal for spicery and lace :  
And thus the craft and avarice of these  
Urged on the youth, and gave his conscience  
ease.

'Him loved the maiden Rachel, fondly loved,  
As many a sigh and tear in absence proved,  
And many a fear for dangers that she knew,  
And many a doubt what one so gay might do :  
Of guilt she thought not,—she had often heard  
They bought and sold, and nothing wrong  
appear'd ;

Her father's maxim this : she understood  
There was some ill,—but he, she knew, was  
good :

It was a traffic—but was done by night—  
If wrong, how trade ? why secrecy, if right ?  
But Robert's conscience, she believed, was  
pure—

And that he read his Bible she was sure.  
'James, better taught, in confidence declared  
His grief for what his guilty brother dared :  
He sigh'd to think how near he was akin  
To one reduced by godless men to sin ;  
Who, being always of the law in dread,  
To other crimes were by the danger led—  
And crimes with like excuse—The smuggler  
cries,

"What guilt is his who pays for what he buys ?"  
The poacher questions, with perverted mind,  
"Were not the gifts of heaven for all de-  
sign'd ?"

*This* cries, "I sin not—take not till I pay ;"—  
*That*, "My own hand brought down my proper  
prey :"—

And while to such fond arguments they cling,  
How fear they God ? how honour they the  
king ?

Such men associate, and each other aid,  
Till all are guilty, rash, and desperate made ;  
Till to some lawless deed the wretches fly,  
And in the act, or for the acting, die.

'The maid was frighten'd,—but, if this was  
true,

Robert for certain no such danger knew,  
He always pray'd ere he a trip began,  
And was too happy for a wicked man :  
How could a creature, who was always gay,  
So kind to all men, so disposed to pray,  
How could he give his heart to such an evil  
way ?

Yet she had fears,—for she could not believe  
That James could lie, or purpose to deceive ;  
But still she found, though not without respect  
For one so good, she must the man reject ;  
For, simple though she was, full well she knew  
What this strong friendship led him to pursue ;  
And, let the man be honest as the light,  
Love warps the mind a little from the right ;  
And she proposed, against the trying day,  
What in the trial she should think and say.

'And now, their love avow'd, in both arose  
Fear and disdain—the orphan pair were foes.  
'Robert, more generous of the two, avow'd  
His scorn, defiance, and contempt aloud.

'James talk'd of pity in a softer tone,  
To Rachel speaking, and with her alone :  
He knew full well, he said, to what must come  
His wretched brother, what would be his  
doom :

Thus he her bosom fenced with dread about ;  
But love he could not with his skill drive out.  
Still he effected something,—and that skill  
Made the love wretched, though it could not  
kill ;

And Robert fail'd, though much he tried, to  
prove

He had no guilt—She granted he had love.

'Thus they proceeded, till a winter came,  
When the stern keeper told of stolen game :  
Throughout the woods the poaching dogs had  
been,

And from him nothing should the robbers  
screen,

From him and law,—he would all hazards run,  
Nor spare a poacher, were his brother one—  
Love, favour, interest, tie of blood should fail,  
Till vengeance bore him bleeding to the jail.

'Poor Rachel shudder'd,—smuggling she  
could name

Without confusion, for she felt not shame ;  
But poachers were her terror, and a wood  
Which they frequented had been mark'd by  
blood ;

And though she thought her Robert was secure  
In better thoughts, yet could she not be sure.

'James now was urgent,—it would break  
his heart

With hope, with her, and with such views to  
part,

When one so wicked would her hand possess,  
And he a brother !—that was his distress,  
And must be hers—She heard him, and she  
sigh'd,

Looking in doubt,—but nothing she replied.

'There was a generous feeling in her mind,  
That told her this was neither good nor kind :  
James caused her terror, but he did no more—  
Her love was now as it had been before.

'Their traffic fail'd,—and the adventurous  
crew

No more their profitless attempts renew :  
Dig they will not, and beg they might in vain—  
Had they not pride, and what can then  
remain ?

'Now was the game destroy'd, and not an  
hare

Escaped at least the danger of the snare ;

Woods of their feather'd beauty were bereft,  
The beauteous victims of the silent theft ;  
The well-known shops received a large supply,  
That they who could not kill at least might  
buy.

'James was enraged, enraged his lord, and  
both

Confirm'd their threatening with a vengeful  
oath :

Fresh and was sought,—and nightly on the  
lands

Walk'd on their watch the strong determined  
bands :

Pardon was offer'd, and a promised pay  
To him who would the desperate gang betray.

'Nor fail'd the measure,—on a certain night  
A few were seized—the rest escaped by flight ;  
Yet they resisted boldly ere they fled,  
And blows were dealt around, and blood was  
shed ;

Two groaning helpers on the earth were laid,  
When more arrived the lawful cause to aid :  
Then four determined men were seized and  
bound,

And Robert in this desperate number found :  
In prison fetter'd, he deplored his fate,  
And cursed the folly he perceived too late.

'James was a favourite with his lord,—the  
zeal

He show'd was such as masters ever feel :

If he for vengeance on a culprit cried,

Or if for mercy, still his lord complied :

And now, 'twas said, he will for mercy plead,  
For his own brother's was the guilty deed :  
True, the hurt man is in a mending way,  
But must be crippled to his dying day.

'Now James had vow'd the law should take  
its course,

He would not stay it, if he did not force ;

He could his witness, if he pleased, with-  
draw,

Or he could arm with certain death the law :  
This he attested to the maid, and true,

If this he could not, yet he much could do.

'How suffer'd then that maid,—no thought  
she had,

No view of days to come, that was not sad ;  
As sad as life with all its hopes resign'd,

As sad as ought but guilt can make mankind.

'With bitter grief the pleasures she review'd  
Of early hope, with innocence pursued,  
When she began to love, and he was fond and  
good :

He now must die, she heard from every tongue—

Die, and so thoughtless ! perish, and so young !  
Brave, kind, and generous, tender, constant,  
true,

And he must die—then will I perish too !

‘ A thousand acts in every age will prove  
Women are valiant in a cause they love ;  
If fate the favour’d swain in danger place,  
They heed not danger—perils they embrace ;  
They dare the world’s contempt, they brave  
their name’s disgrace ;

They on the ocean meet its wild alarms,  
They search the dungeon with extended arms ;  
The utmost trial of their faith they prove,  
And yield the lover to assert their love.

‘ James knew his power—his feelings were  
not nice—

Mercy he sold, and she must pay the price :  
If his good lord forbore to urge their fate,  
And he the utmost of their guilt to state,  
The felons might their forfeit lives redeem,  
And in their country’s cause regain esteem ;  
But nevermore that man, whom he had shame  
To call his brother, must she see or name.

‘ Rachel was meek, but she had firmness  
too,

And reason’d much on what she ought to do :  
In Robert’s place, she knew what she should  
choose—

But life was not the thing she fear’d to lose :  
She knew that she could not their contract  
break,

Nor for her life a new engagement make ;  
But he was man, and guilty,—death so near  
Might not to his as to her mind appear ;  
And he might wish, to spare that forfeit life,  
The maid he loved might be his brother’s wife,  
Although that brother was his bitter foe,  
And he must all the sweets of life forego.

‘ This would she try,—intent on this alone,  
She could assume a calm and settled tone :  
She spake with firmness—“ I will Robert see,  
Know what he wishes, and what I must be ; ”  
For James had now discover’d to the maid  
His inmost heart, and how he must be paid,  
If he his lord would soften, and would hide  
The facts that must the culprit’s fate decide.  
“ Go not,” he said,—for she her full intent  
Proclaim’d—To go she purposed, and she  
went :

She took a guide, and went with purpose stern  
The secret wishes of her friend to learn.

‘ She saw him fetter’d, full of grief, alone,  
Still as the dead, and he suppress’d a groan  
At her appearance—Now she pray’d for  
strength ;

And the sad couple could converse at length.

‘ It was a scene that shook her to repeat,—  
Life fought with love, both powerful, and both  
sweet.

“ Wilt thou die, Robert, or preserve thy  
life ?

Shall I be thine own maid, or James’s wife ? ”

“ His wife !—No !—Never will I thee resign—  
No, Rachel, no ! ”—“ Then am I ever thine :  
I know thee rash and guilty,—but to thee  
I pledge my vow, and thine will ever be :  
Yet think again,—the life that God has lent  
Is thine, but not to cast away,—Consent,  
If ’ tis thy wish ; for this I made my way  
To thy distress—Command, and I obey.”

“ Perhaps my brother may have gain’d  
thy heart ! ”—

“ Then why this visit, if I wish’d to part ?  
Was it, ah, man ungrateful ! wise to make  
Effort like this, to hazard for thy sake  
A spotless reputation, and to be  
A suppliant to that stern man for thee ?  
But I forgive,—thy spirit has been tried,  
And thou art weak, but still thou must decide.

“ I ask’d thy brother, James, would’st  
thou command,

Without the loving heart, the obedient hand ?  
I ask thee, Robert, lover, canst thou part  
With this poor hand, when master of the  
heart ?

He answer’d, ‘ Yes ! ’—I tarry thy reply,  
Resign’d with him to live, content with thee  
to die.”

Assured of this, with spirits low and tame,  
Here life so purchased—there a death of  
shame ;

Death once his merriment, but now his dread  
And he with terror thought upon the dead :

“ O ! sure ’ tis better to endure the care  
And pain of life, than go we know not where !—  
And is there not the dreaded hell for sin,  
Or is it only this I feel within ?

That, if it lasted, no man would sustain,  
But would by any change relieve the pain :  
Forgive me, love ! it is a loathsome thing  
To live not thine ; but still this dreaded sting  
Of death torments me—I to nature cling—  
Go, and be his—but love him not, be sure—  
Go, love him not,—and I will life endure :

He, too, is mortal!"——Rachel deeply sigh'd,  
But would no more converse: she had complied,  
And was no longer free—she was his brother's bride.

"Farewell!" she said, with kindness, but not fond,  
Feeling the pressure of the recent bond,  
And put her tenderness apart to give  
Advice to one who so desired to live:  
She then departed, join'd the attending guide,  
Reflected—weep'd—was sad—was satisfied.

'James on her worth and virtue could depend,  
He listen'd gladly to her story's end:  
Again he promised Robert's life to save,  
And claim'd the hand that she in payment gave.

'Robert, when death no longer was in view,  
Scorn'd what was done, but could not this undo:

The day appointed for the trial near  
He view'd with shame, and not unmix'd with fear,—

James might deceive him; and, if not, the schemes

Of men may fail——Can I depend on James?  
'He might; for now the grievous price was paid—

James to the altar led the victim maid,  
And gave the trembling girl his faithful word  
For Robert's safety, and so gave my lord.

'But this, and all the promise hope could give,

Gilded not life,—it was not joy to live;  
There was no smile in Rachel, nothing gay;  
The hours pass'd off, but never danced away.

'When drew the gloomy day for trial near  
There came a note to Robert—"Banish fear!"  
He knew whence safety came,—his terror fled,  
But rage and vengeance fill'd his soul instead.

'A stronger fear in his companions rose—  
The day of trial on their hopes might close:  
They had no brothers, none to intercede  
For them, their friends suspected, and in need;  
Scatter'd, they judged, and could unite  
no more,—

Not so, they then were at the prison door.

'For some had met who sought the haunts  
they loved,

And were to pity and to vengeance moved:  
Their fellows perish! and they see their fall,—  
Why not attempt the steep but guardless wall?

'Attempt was made, his part assign'd each man,

And they succeeded in the desperate plan;  
In truth, a purposed mercy smooth'd their way,

But that they knew not—all triumphant they.  
Safe in their well-known haunts, they all prepared

To plan anew, and show how much they dared.

'With joy the troubled heart of Robert beat,  
For life was his, and liberty was sweet;  
He look'd around in freedom—in delight?  
O! no—his Rachel was another's right!

"Right!—has he then preserved me in the day

Of my distress?—He has the lovely pay!

But I no freedom at the slaves request,

The price I paid shall then be repossess'd!

Alas! her virtue and the law prevent,

Force cannot be, and she will not consent;

But were that brother gone!—A brother?

No!

A circumventor!—and the wretch shall go!

Yet not this hand—How shifts about my mind,

Ungovern'd, guideless, drifting in the wind,

And I am all a tempest, whirl'd around

By dreadful thoughts, that fright me and confound;—

I would I saw him on the earth laid low!

I wish the fate, but must not give the blow!"

'So thinks a man when thoughtful; he prefers

A life of peace till man his anger stirs,

Then all the efforts of his reason cease,

And he forgets how pleasant was that peace,

Till the wild passions what they seek obtain,

And then he sinks into his calm again.

'Now met the lawless clan,—in secret met,

And down at their convivial board were set;

The plans in view to past adventures led,

And the past conflicts present anger bred;

They sigh'd for pleasures gone, they groan'd  
for heroes dead:

Their ascetic stores were rifled,—strong  
desires

Awaked, and wine rekindled latent fires.

'It was a night such bold desires to move,

Strong winds and wintry torrents filled the  
grove;

The crackling boughs that in the forest fell,

The cawing rooks, the cur's affrighten'd yell:



The scenes above the wood, the floods below,  
Were mix'd, and none the single sound could  
know ;

"Loud blow the blasts," they cried, "and call  
us as they blow."

'In such a night—and then the heroes told  
What had been done in better times of old ;  
How they had conquer'd all opposed to them,  
By force in part, in part by stratagem ;  
And as the tales inflamed the fiery crew,  
What had been done they then prepared to do ;  
" 'Tis a last night ! " they said—the angry  
blast

And roaring floods seem'd answering " 'tis  
a last ! "

'James knew they met, for he had spies about,  
Grave, sober men, whom none presumed to  
doubt ;

For if suspected, they had soon been tried  
Where fears are evidence, and doubts decide :  
But these escaped—Now James com-  
panions took,

Sturdy and bold, with terror-stirring look ;  
He had before, by informations led,  
Left the afflicted partner of his bed ;  
Awaked his men, and through plantations  
wide,

Deep-woods, and trackless ling, had been their  
guide ;

And then return'd to wake the pitying wife,  
And hear her tender terrors for his life.

'But in this night a sure informer came,  
They were assembled who attack'd his game ;  
Who more than once had through the park  
made way,

And slain the dappled breed, or vow'd to slay ;  
The trembling spy had heard the solemn vow,  
And need and vengeance both inspired them  
now.

'The keeper early had retired to rest  
For brief repose ;—sad thoughts his mind  
possess'd ;

In his short sleep he started from his bed,  
And ask'd in fancy's terror "Is he dead ?"

'There was a call below, when James awoke,  
Rose from his bed, and arms to aid him took,  
Not all defensive !—there his helpers stood,  
Arm'd like himself, and hastening to the wood.

"Why this ?" he said, for Rachel pour'd  
her tears

Profuse, that spoke involuntary fears :

"Sleep, that so early thou for us may'st wake,  
And we our comforts in return may take ;

Sleep, and farewell !" he said, and took his way,  
And the sad wife in neither could obey ;  
She slept not nor well fared, but restless dwelt  
On her past life, and past afflictions felt ;  
The man she loved the brother and the foe  
Of him she married !—It had wrought her woe ;  
Not that she loved, but pitied, and that now  
Was, so she fear'd, infringement of her vow :  
James too was civil, though she must confess  
That his was not her kind of happiness ;  
That he would shoot the man who shot a hare  
Was what her timid conscience could not bear ;  
But still she loved him—wonder'd where he  
stray'd

In this loud night ! and if he were afraid.

'More than one hour she thought, and  
dropping then

In sudden sleep, cried loudly "Spare him, men !  
And do no murder !"—then awaked she rose,  
And thought no more of trying for repose.

'Twas past the dead of night, when every  
sound

That nature mingles might be heard around ;  
But none from man,—man's feeble voice was  
hush'd,

Where rivers swelling roar'd, and woods were  
crush'd ;

Hurried by these, the wife could sit no more,  
But must the terrors of the night explore.

'Softly she left her door, her garden gate,  
And seem'd as then committed to her fate ;  
To every horrid thought and doubt a prey,  
She hurried on, already lost her way ;

Oft as she glided on in that sad night,  
She stopp'd to listen, and she look'd for light ;  
An hour she wander'd, and was still to learn  
Aught of her husband's safety or return :  
A sudden break of heavy clouds could show  
A place she knew not, but she strove to  
know ;

Still further on she crept with trembling feet,  
With hope a friend, with fear a foe to meet :  
And there was something fearful in the sight,  
And in the sound of what appear'd to-night ;

For now, of night and nervous terror bred,  
Arose a strong and superstitious dread ;  
She heard strange noises, and the shapes she  
saw

Of fancied beings bound her soul in awe.

'The moon was risen, and she sometimes  
shone

Through thick white clouds, that flew tumul-  
tuous on,

Passing beneath her with an eagle's speed,  
That her soft light imprison'd and then freed ;  
The fitful glimmering through the hedge-row  
green

Gave a strange beauty to the changing scene ;  
And roaring winds and rushing waters lent  
Their mingled voice that to the spirit went.

'To these she listen'd ; but new sounds were  
heard,  
And sight more startling to her soul appear'd ;  
There were low lengthen'd tones with sobs  
between,

And near at hand, but nothing yet was seen ;  
She hurried on, and "Who is there ?" she  
cried,

"A dying wretch !" — was from the earth re-  
plied.

'It was her lover, was the man she gave,  
The price she paid, himself from death to save ;  
With whom, expiring, she must kneel and pray,  
While the soul fitted from the shivering clay  
That press'd the dewy ground, and bled its  
life away !

'This was the part that duty bade her take,  
Instant and ere her feelings were awake ;  
But now they waked to anguish ; there came  
then,  
Hurrying with lights, loud-speaking, eager  
men.

"And here, my lord, we met—And who is  
here ?

The keeper's wife—Ah ! woman, go not near !  
There lies the man that was the head of all—  
See, in his temples went the fatal ball !  
And James that instant, who was then our  
guide,

Felt in his heart the adverse shot, and died !  
It was a sudden meeting, and the light  
Of a dull moon made indistinct our fight ;  
He foremost fell ! — But see, the woman creeps  
Like a lost thing, that wanders as she sleeps.  
See, here her husband's body—but she knows  
That other dead ! and that her action shows.  
Rachel ! why look you at your mortal foe ?—  
She does not hear us—Whither will she go ?"

'Now, more attentive, on the dead they  
gazed,  
And they were brothers : sorrowing and  
amazed,

On all a momentary silence came,  
A common softness, and a moral shame.

"Seized you the poachers?" said my  
lord—"They fled,

And we pursued not,—one of them was dead,  
And one of us ; they hurried through the  
wood,

Two lives were gone, and we no more pursued.  
Two lives of men, of valiant brothers lost !  
Enough, my lord, do hares and pheasants  
cost !"

'So many thought, and there is found a heart  
To dwell upon the deaths on either part ;  
Since this their morals have been more correct,  
The cruel spirit in the place is check'd ;  
His lordship holds not in such sacred care,  
Nor takes such dreadful vengeance for a hare ;  
The smugglers fear, the poacher stands in awe  
Of Heaven's own act, and reverences the law ;  
There was, there is a terror in the place  
That operates on man's offending race ;  
Such acts will stamp their moral on the soul,  
And while the bad they threaten and control,  
Will to the pious and the humble say,  
Yours is the right, the safe, the certain way,  
'Tis wisdom to be good, 'tis virtue to obey.

'So Rachel thinks, the pure, the good, the  
meek,

Whose outward acts the inward purposes speak ;  
As men will children at their sports behold,  
And smile to see them, though unmoved and  
cold,

Smile at the recollected games, and then  
Depart and mix in the affairs of men :  
So Rachel looks upon the world, and sees  
It cannot longer pain her, longer please,  
But just detain the passing thought, or cause  
A gentle smile of pity or applause ;  
And then the recollected soul repairs  
Her slumbering hope, and heeds her own  
affairs."

## BOOK XXII. THE VISIT CONCLUDED

Richard prepares to depart—Visits the Rector—His Reception—Visit to the Sisters—Their present situation—The Morning of the last Day—The Conference of the Brothers—Their Excursion—Richard dissatisfied—The Brother expostulates—The End of their Ride, and of the Day's Business—Conclusion.

'No letters, Tom?' said Richard—'None to-day.'

'Excuse me, Brother, I must now away; Matilda never in her life so long Deferr'd—Alas! there must be something wrong!'

'Comfort!' said George, and all he could he lent;

'Wait till your promised day, and I consent; Two days, and those of hope, may cheerfully be spent.

'And keep your purpose, to review the place,

My choice; and I beseech you do it grace: Mark each apartment, their proportions learn, And either use or elegance discern; Look o'er the land, the gardens, and their wall, Find out the something to admire in all; And should you praise them in a knowing style, I'll take it kindly—it is well—a smile.'

Richard must now his morning visits pay, And bid farewell! for he must go away.

He sought the Rector first, not lately seen, For he had absent from his parish been;

'Farewell!' the younger man with feeling cried,

'Farewell!' the cold but worthy priest replied;

'When do you leave us?'—'I have days but two.'

'Tis a short time—but, well—Adieu, adieu!'

'Now here is one,' said Richard, as he went To the next friend in pensive discontent,

'With whom I sate in social, friendly ease, Whom I respected, whom I wish'd to please; Whose love profess'd, I question'd not was true,

And now to hear his heartless, "Well! adieu!"

'But 'tis not well—and he a man of sense, Grave, but yet looking strong benevolence; Whose slight acerbity and roughness told To his advantage; yet the man is cold; Nor will he know, when rising in the morn, That such a being to the world was born.

'Are such the friendships we contract in life? O! give me then the friendship of a wife! Adieus, nay, parting-pains to us are sweet, They make so glad the moments when we meet.

'For though we look not for regard intense, Or warm professions in a man of sense, Yet in the daily intercourse of mind I thought that found which I desired to find, Feeling and frankness—thus it seem'd to me, And such farewell!—Well, Rector, let it be!'

Of the fair sisters then he took his leave, Forget he could not, he must think and grieve, Must the impression of their wrongs retain, Their very patience adding to his pain; And still the better they their sorrows bore, His friendly nature made him feel them more.

He judg'd they must have many a heavy hour When the mind suffers from a want of power; When troubled long we find our strength decay'd,

And cannot then recall our better aid; For to the mind, ere yet that aid has flown, Grief has possessed, and made it all his own; And patience suffers, till, with gather'd might, The scatter'd forces of the soul unite.

But few and short such times of suffering were

In Lucy's mind, and brief the reign of care. Jane had, indeed, her flights, but had in them

What we could pity but must not condemn; For they were always pure and oft sublime, And such as triumph'd over earth and time, Thoughts of eternal love that souls possess, Foretaste divine of Heaven's own happiness.

Oft had he seen them, and esteem'd had sprung In his free mind for maids so sad and young, So good and grieving, and his place was high In their esteem, his friendly brother's nigh, But yet beneath; and when he said adieu! Their tone was kind, and was responsive too.

Parting was painful; when adieu he cried,  
 'You will return?' the gentle girls replied;  
 'You must return! your Brother knows you  
 now,

But to exist without you knows not how;  
 Has he not told us of the lively joy  
 He takes—forgive us—in the Brother-boy?  
 He is alone and pensive; you can give  
 Pleasure to one by whom a number live  
 In daily comfort—sure for this you met,  
 That for his debtors you might pay a debt—  
 The poor are call'd ungrateful, but you still  
 Will have their thanks for this—indeed you  
 will.'

Richard but little said, for he of late  
 Held with himself contention and debate.

'My brother loves me, his regard I know,  
 But will not such affection weary grow?  
 He kindly says "defer the parting day,"  
 But yet may wish me in his heart away;  
 Nothing but kindness I in him perceive,  
 In me 'tis kindness then to take my leave;  
 Why should I grieve if he should weary be?  
 There have been visitors who wearied me;  
 He yet may love, and we may part in peace,  
 Nay, in affection—novelty must cease—  
 Man is but man; the thing he most desires  
 Pleases awhile—then pleases not—then tires;  
 George to his former habits and his friends  
 Will now return, and so my visit ends.'

Thus Richard communed with his heart;  
 but still

He found opposed his reason and his will,  
 Found that his thoughts were busy in this  
 train,

And he was striving to be calm in vain.

These thoughts were passing while he yet  
 forbore  
 To leave the friends whom he might see no  
 more.

Then came a chubby child and sought relief,  
 Sobbing in all the impotence of grief;  
 A full fed girl she was, with ruddy cheek,  
 And features coarse, that grosser feelings speak,  
 To whom another miss, with passions strong,  
 And slender fist, had done some baby-wrong.  
 On Lucy's gentle mind had Barlow wrought  
 To teach this child, whom she had labouring  
 taught

With unpaid love—this unproductive brain  
 Would little comprehend, and less retain.

A farmer's daughter, with redundant health,  
 And double Lucy's weight and Lucy's wealth,

Had won the man's regard, and he with her  
 Possess'd the treasure vulgar minds prefer;  
 A man of thrift, and thriving, he possess'd  
 What he esteem'd of earthly good the best;  
 And Lucy's well-stored mind had not a charm  
 For this true lover of the well-stock'd farm,  
 This slave to petty wealth and rustic toil,  
 This earth-devoted wooer of the soil:—  
 But she with meekness took the wayward  
 child,

And sought to make the savage nature mild.

But Jane her judgment with decision gave—  
 'Train not an idiot to oblige a slave.'

And where is Bloomer? Richard would  
 have said,

But he was cautious, feeling, and afraid;  
 And little either of the hero knew,  
 And little sought—he might be married too.

Now to his home, the morning visits past,  
 Return'd the guest—that evening was his last.

He met his Brother, and they spoke of those  
 From whom his comforts in the village rose;  
 Spoke of the favourites, whom so good and  
 kind

It was peculiar happiness to find:  
 Then for the sisters in their griefs they felt,  
 And, sad themselves, on saddening subject  
 dwelt.

But George was willing all this woe to spare,  
 And let to-morrow be to-morrow's care:  
 He of his purchase talk'd—a thing of course,  
 As men will boldly praise a new-bought horse.

Richard was not to all its beauty blind,  
 And promised still to seek, with hope to find:  
 'The price indeed—'

'Yes, that,' said George, 'is high;  
 But if I bought not, one was sure to buy,  
 Who might the social comforts we enjoy,  
 And every comfort lessen or destroy.

'We must not always reckon what we give,  
 But think how precious 'tis in peace to live;  
 Some neighbour Nimrod might in very pride  
 Have stirr'd my anger, and have then defied;  
 Or worse, have loved, and teased me to excess  
 By his kind care to give me happiness;  
 Or might his lady and her daughters bring  
 To raise my spirits, to converse, and sing:  
 'Twas not the benefit alone I view'd,  
 But thought what horrid things I might  
 exclude.

'Some party man might here have sat him  
 down,  
 Some country champion, railing at the crown,

Or some true courtier, both prepared to prove,  
Who loved not them, could not their country  
love :

If we have value for our health and ease,  
Should we not buy off enemies like these ?

So pass'd the evening in a quiet way,  
When, lo ! the morning of the parting day.

Each to the table went with clouded look,  
And George in silence gazed upon a book ;  
Something that chance had offer'd to his view,  
He knew not what, or cared not, if he knew.

Richard his hand upon a paper laid,—  
His vacant eye upon the carpet stray'd ;  
His tongue was talking something of the day,  
And his vex'd mind was wandering on his way.

They spake by fits,—but neither had concern

In the replies,—they nothing wish'd to learn,  
Nor to relate ; each sat as one who tries  
To baffle sadnesses and sympathies :

Each of his Brother took a steady view,—  
As actor he, and as observer too.

Richard, whose heart was ever free and frank,

Had now a trial, and before it sank :

He thought his Brother—parting now so near—

Appear'd not as his Brother should appear ;  
He could as much of tenderness remark  
When parting for a ramble in the park.

' Yet, is it just ? ' he thought ; ' and would I see

My Brother wretched but to part with me ?  
What can he further in my mind explore ?  
He saw enough, and he would see no more :  
Happy himself, he wishes now to slide  
Back to his habits—He is satisfied ;  
But I am not—this cannot be denied.

' He has been kind,—so let me think him still ;

Yet he expresses not a wish, a will  
To meet again ! '—And thus affection strove  
With pride, and petulance made war on love :  
He thought his Brother cool—he knew him kind—

And there was sore division in his mind.

' Hours yet remain,—'tis misery to sit  
With minds for conversation all unfit ;  
No evil can from change of place arise,  
And good will spring from air and exercise :  
Suppose I take the purposed ride with you,  
And guide your jaded praise to objects new,  
That buyers see ? '—

And Richard gave assent  
Without resistance, and without intent :

He liked not nor declined,—and forth the  
Brothers went.

' Come, my dear Richard ! let us cast away  
All evil thoughts,—let us forget the day,  
And fight like men with grief till we like boys  
are gay.'

Thus George,—and even this in Richard's mind

Was judg'd an effort rather wise than kind ;  
This flow'd from something he observed of late,

And he could feel it, but he could not state :  
He thought some change appear'd,—yet fail'd  
to prove,

Even as he tried, abatement in the love ;  
But in his Brother's manner was restraint  
That he could feel, and yet he could not paint.

That they should part in peace full well he knew,

But much he fear'd to part with coolness too :  
George had been peevish when the subject  
rose,

And never fail'd the parting to oppose ;  
Name it, and straight his features cloudy grew  
To stop the journey as the clouds will do ;—  
And thus they rode along in pensive mood,  
Their thoughts pursuing, by their cares pursued.

' Richard,' said George, ' I see it is in vain  
By love or prayer my Brother to retain ;  
And, truth to tell, it was a foolish thing  
A man like thee from thy repose to bring  
Ours to disturb—Say, how am I to live  
Without the comforts thou art wont to give ?  
How will the heavy hours my mind afflict,—  
No one t' agree, no one to contradict,  
None to awake, excite me, or prevent,  
To hear a tale, or hold an argument,  
To help my worship in a case of doubt,  
And bring me in my blunders fairly out.

' Who now by manners lively or serene  
Comes between me and sorrow like a screen,  
And giving, what I look'd not to have found,  
A care, an interest in the world around ? '

Silent was Richard, striving to adjust  
His thoughts for speech,—for speak, he  
thought, he must :

Something like war within his bosom strove—  
His mild, kind nature, and his proud self-love :  
Grateful he was, and with his courage meek,—  
But he was hurt, and he resolved to speak.

'Yes, my dear Brother! from my soul  
I grieve

Thee and the proofs of thy regard to leave:  
Thou hast been all that I could wish,—my  
pride

Exults to find that I am thus allied:  
Yet to express a feeling, how it came,  
The pain it gives, its nature and its name,  
I know not,—but of late, I will confess,  
Not that thy love is little, but is less.

'Hast thou received me in thy present  
mood,

Sure I had held thee to be kind and good;  
But thou wert all the warmest heart could

state,  
Affection dream, or hope anticipate;

I must have wearied thee yet day by day,—  
"Stay!" said my Brother, and 'twas good

to stay;

But now, forgive me, thinking I perceive  
Change undefined, and as I think I grieve.

'Have I offended?—Proud although I be,  
I will be humble, and concede to thee:  
Have I intruded on thee when thy mind  
Was vex'd, and then to solitude inclined?

O! there are times when all things will molest  
Minds so disposed, so heavy, so oppress'd;  
And thine, I know, is delicate and nice,  
Sickening at folly, and at war with vice:

Then, at a time when thou wert vex'd with  
these,

I have intruded, let affection tease,  
And so offended.'—

'Richard, if thou hast,  
'Tis at this instant, nothing in the past:  
No, thou art all a Brother's love would choose;  
And, having lost thee, I shall interest lose  
In all that I possess: I pray thee tell  
Wherein thy host has fail'd to please thee  
well,—

Do I neglect thy comforts?'—

'O! not thou,  
But art thyself uncomfortable now,  
And 'tis from thee and from thy looks I gain  
This painful knowledge—'tis my Brother's  
pain;

And yet that something in my spirit lives,  
Something that spleen excites and sorrow  
gives,

I may confess,—for not in thee I trace  
Alone this change, it is in all the place:  
Smile if thou wilt in scorn, for I am glad  
A smile at any rate is to be had.

'But there is Jacques, who ever seem'd to  
treat

Thy Brother kindly as we chanced to meet;  
Nor with thee only pleased our worthy guide,  
But in the hedge-row path and green-wood  
side,

There he would speak with that familiar ease  
That makes a trifle, makes a nothing please.

'But now to my farewell,—and that I spoke  
With honest sorrow,—with a careless look,  
Gazing unalter'd on some stupid prose—  
His sermon for the Sunday I suppose,—

"Going?" said he: "why then the 'Squire  
and you

Will part at last—You're going?—Well,  
adieu!"

'True, we were not in friendship bound like  
those

Who will adopt each other's friends and foes,  
Without esteem or hatred of their own,—

But still we were to intimacy grown;  
And sure of Jacques when I had taken leave  
It would have grieved me,—and it ought to  
grieve;

But I in him could not affection trace,—  
Careless he put his sermons in their place,  
With no more feeling than his sermon-case.

'Not so those generous girls beyond the  
brook,—

It quite unmann'd me as my leave I took.

'But, my dear Brother! when I take at  
night,

In my own home, and in their mother's sight,  
By turns my children, or together see  
A pair contending for the vacant knee,  
When to Matilda I begin to tell

What in my visit first and last befell—  
Of this your village, of her tower and spire,  
And, above all, her Rector and her 'Squire,  
How will the tale be marr'd when I shall end—  
I left displeased the Brother and the friend!'—

'Nay, Jacques is honest—Marry, he was then  
Engaged—What! part an author and his pen?  
Just in the fit, and when th'inspiring ray  
Shot on his brain, t' arrest it in its way!  
Come, thou shalt see him in an easier vein,  
Nor of his looks nor of his words complain:  
Art thou content?'—

If Richard had replied,  
'I am,' his manner had his words belied:  
Even from his Brother's cheerfulness he drew  
Something to vex him—what, he scarcely  
knew:

So he evading said, 'My evil fate  
Upon my comforts throws a gloom of late :  
Matilda writes not ; and, when last she wrote,  
I read no letter—'twas a trader's note,—  
"Yours I received," and all that formal prate  
That is so hateful, that she knows I hate.

'Dejection reigns, I feel, but cannot tell  
Why upon me the dire infection fell :  
Madmen may say that they alone are sane,  
And all beside have a distemper'd brain ;  
Something like this I feel,—and I include  
Myself among the frantic multitude :  
But, come, Matilda writes, although but ill,  
And home has health, and that is comfort still.'

George stopt his horse, and with the kindest  
look

Spoke to his Brother,—earnestly he spoke,  
As one who to his friend his heart reveals,  
And all the hazard with the comfort feels.

'Soon as I loved thee, Richard,—and  
I loved

Before my reason had the will approved,  
Who yet right early had her sanction lent,  
And with affection in her verdict went,—  
So soon I felt, that thus a friend to gain,  
And then to lose, is but to purchase pain :  
Daily the pleasure grew, then sad the day  
That takes it all in its increase away !

'Patient thou wert, and kind,—but well  
I knew

The husband's wishes, and the father's too ;  
I saw how check'd they were, and yet in secret  
grew :

Once and again, I urged thee to delay  
Thy purposed journey, still deferr'd the day,  
And still on its approach the pain increased  
Till my request and thy compliance ceased ;  
I could not further thy affection task,  
Nor more of one so self-resisting ask ;  
But yet to lose thee, Richard, and with thee  
All hope of social joys—it cannot be.  
Nor could I bear to meet thee as a boy  
From school, his parents, to obtain a joy,  
That lessens day by day, and one will soon  
destroy.

'No! I would have thee, Brother, all my own,  
To grow beside me as my trees have grown ;  
For ever near me, pleasant in my sight,  
And in my mind, my pride and my delight.

'Yet will I tell thee, Richard ; had I found  
Thy mind dependent and thy heart unsound,  
Hadst thou been poor, obsequious, and disposed  
With any wish or measure to have closed,

Willing on me and gladly to attend,  
The younger brother, the convenient friend ;  
Thy speculation its reward had made  
Like other ventures—thou hadst gain'd in  
trade ;

What reason urged, or Jacques esteem'd thy  
due,

Thine had it been, and I, a trader too,  
Had paid my debt, and home my Brother sent,  
Nor glad nor sorry that he came or went ;  
Who to his wife and children would have told,  
They had an uncle, and the man was old ;  
Till every girl and boy had learn'd to prate  
Of uncle George, his gout, and his estate.

'Thus had we parted ; but as now thou art,  
I must not lose thee—No ! I cannot part ;  
Is it in human nature to consent,  
To give up all the good that heaven has lent,  
All social ease and comfort to forego,  
And live again the solitary ? No !

'We part no more, dear Richard ! thou  
wilt need

Thy Brother's help to teach thy boys to read ;  
And I should love to hear Matilda's psalm,  
To keep my spirit in a morning calm,  
And feel the soft devotion that prepares  
The soul to rise above its earthly cares ;  
Then thou and I, an independent two,  
May have our parties, and defend them too ;  
Thy liberal notions, and my loyal fears,  
Will give us subjects for our future years ;  
We will for truth alone contend and read,  
And our good Jacques shall oversee our creed.

'Such were my views ; and I had quickly  
made

Some bold attempts my Brother to persuade  
To think as I did ; but I knew too well  
Whose now thou wert, with whom thou wert  
to dwell,

And why, I said, return him doubtful home,  
Six months to argue if he then would come  
Some six months after ? and, beside, I know  
That all the happy are of course the slow ;  
And thou at home art happy, there wilt stay,  
Dallying 'twixt will and will-not many a day,  
And fret the gloss of hope, and hope itself away.

'Jacques is my friend ; to him I gave my  
heart,

You see my Brother, see I would not part ;  
Wilt thou an embassy of love disdain ?  
Go to this sister, and my views explain ;  
Gloss o'er my failings, paint me with a grace  
That Love beholds, put meaning in my face ;

Describe that dwelling ; talk how well we live,  
And all its glory to our village give ;  
Praise the kind sisters whom we love so much,  
And thine own virtues like an artist touch.

‘ Tell her, and here my secret purpose  
show,

That no dependence shall my sister know ;  
Hers all the freedom that she loves shall be,  
And mine the debt,—then press her to agree ;  
Say, that my Brother’s wishes wait on hers,  
And his affection what she wills prefers.

‘ Forgive me, Brother,—these my words  
and more

Our friendly Rector to Matilda bore ;  
At large, at length, were all my views ex-  
plain’d,

And to my joy my wishes I obtain’d.

‘ Dwell in that house, and we shall still be  
near,

Absence and parting I no more shall fear ;  
Dwell in thy home, and at thy will exclude  
All who shall dare upon thee to intrude.

‘ Again thy pardon,—’twas not my design  
To give surprise ; a better view was mine ;  
But let it pass—and yet I wish’d to see  
That meeting too : and happy may it be !’

Thus George had spoken, and then look’d  
around,

And smiled as one who then his road had  
found ;

‘ Follow !’ he cried, and briskly urged his  
horse :

Richard was puzzled, but obey’d of course ;  
He was affected like a man astray,  
Lost, but yet knowing something of the way ;  
Till a wood clear’d, that still conceal’d the  
view,

Richard the purchase of his Brother knew ;  
And something flash’d upon his mind not clear,  
But much with pleasure mix’d, in part with  
fear ;

As one who wandering through a stormy night  
Sees his own home, and gladdens at the sight,  
Yet feels some doubt if fortune had decreed  
That lively pleasure in such time of need ;  
So Richard felt—but now the mansion came  
In view direct,—he knew it for the same ;  
There too the garden walk, the elms design’d  
To guard the peaches from the eastern wind ;  
And there the sloping glass, that when he  
shines

Gives the sun’s vigour to the ripening vines.—

‘ It is my Brother’s !’—

‘ No !’ he answers, ‘ No !

’Tis to thy own possession that we go ;  
It is thy wife’s, and will thy children’s be,  
Earth, wood, and water !—all for thine and  
thee ;

Bought in thy name—Alight, my friend, and  
come,

I do beseech thee, to thy proper home ;  
There wilt thou soon thy own Matilda view,  
She knows our deed, and she approves it too ;  
Before her all our views and plans were laid,  
And Jacques was there t’ explain and to  
persuade.

Here, on this lawn, thy boys and girls shall run,  
And play their gambols when their tasks are  
done ;

There, from that window, shall their mother  
view

The happy tribe, and smile at all they do ;  
While thou, more gravely, hiding thy delight,  
Shalt cry “ O ! childish !” and enjoy the sight.

‘ Well, my dear Richard, there’s no more  
to say—

Stay, as you will—do any thing—but stay ;  
Be, I dispute not, steward—what you will,  
Take your own name, but be my Brother still.

‘ And hear me, Richard ! if I should offend,  
Assume the patron, and forget the friend ;  
If aught in word or manner I express  
That only touches on thy happiness ;  
If I be peevish, humorsome, unkind,  
Spoil’d as I am by each subservient mind ;  
For I am humour’d by a tribe who make  
Me more capricious for the pains they take  
To make me quiet ; shouldst thou ever feel  
A wound from this, this leave not time to heal,  
But let thy wife her cheerful smile withhold,  
Let her be civil, distant, cautious, cold ;  
Then shall I woo forgiveness, and repent,  
Nor bear to lose the blessings Heaven has lent.’

But this was needless—there was joy of  
heart,

All felt the good that all desired t’ impart ;  
Respect, affection, and esteem combined,  
In sundry portions ruled in every mind ;  
And o’er the whole an unobtrusive air  
Of pious joy, that urged the silent prayer,  
And bless’d the new-born feelings—Here  
we close

Our Tale of Tales !—Health, reader, and  
repose !



# POSTHUMOUS TALES

[1834]

## TALE I. SILFORD HALL; OR, THE HAPPY DAY

WITHIN a village, many a mile from town,  
A place of small resort and no renown ;—  
Save that it form'd a way, and gave a name  
To SILFORD HALL, it made no claim to  
fame ;—

It was the gain of some, the pride of all,  
That travellers stopt to ask for SILFORD HALL.

Small as it was, the place could boast a  
School,

In which *Nathaniel Perkin* bore the rule.  
Not mark'd for learning deep, or talents rare,  
But for his varying tasks and ceaseless care ;  
Some forty boys, the sons of thrifty men,  
He taught to read, and part to use the pen ;  
While, by more studious care, a favourite few  
Increased his pride—for if the Scholar knew  
Enough for praise, say what the Teacher's  
due ?—

These to his presence, slates in hand, moved on,  
And a grim smile their feats in figures won.

This Man of Letters woo'd in early life  
The Vicar's maiden, whom he made his wife.  
She too can read, as by her song she proves—  
The song Nathaniel made about their loves :  
Five rosy girls, and one fair boy, increased  
The Father's care, whose labours seldom  
ceased.

No day of rest was his. If, now and then,  
His boys for play laid by the book and pen,  
For Lawyer Slow there was some deed to  
write,

Or some young farmer's letter to indite,  
Or land to measure, or, with legal skill,  
To frame some yeoman's widow's peevish will ;  
And on the Sabbath,—when his neighbours  
drest,

To hear their duties, and to take their rest—  
Then, when the Vicar's periods ceased to flow,  
Was heard Nathaniel, in his seat below.

Such were his labours ; but the time is come  
When his son *Peter* clears the hours of gloom,

And brings him aid : though yet a boy, he  
shares

In staid Nathaniel's multifarious cares.  
A king his father, he, a prince, has rule—  
The first of subjects, viceroy of the school :  
But though a prince within that realm he  
reigns,

Hard is the part his duteous soul sustains.  
He with his Father, o'er the furrow'd land,  
Draws the long chain in his uneasy hand,  
And neatly forms at home, what there they  
rudely plann'd.

Content, for all his labour, if he gains  
Some words of praise, and sixpence for his  
pains.

Thus many a hungry day the Boy has fared,  
And would have ask'd a dinner, had he dared.  
When boys are playing, he, for hours of school  
Has sums to set, and copy-books to rule ;  
When all are met, for some sad dunce afraid,  
He, by allowance, lends his timely aid—  
Taught at the student's failings to connive,  
Yet keep his Father's dignity alive :  
For ev'n Nathaniel fears, and might offend,  
If too severe, the farmer, now his friend ;  
Or her, that farmer's lady, who well knows  
Her boy is bright, and needs nor threats nor  
blows.

This seem'd to Peter hard ; and he was loth,  
T' obey and rule, and have the cares of both—  
To miss the master's dignity, and yet,  
No portion of the school-boy's play to get.  
To him the Fiend, as once to Launcelot, cried,  
'Run from thy wrongs !'—'Run where ?'  
his fear replied :

'Run !'—said the Tempter, 'if but hard thy  
fare,  
Hard is it now—it *may* be mended there.'  
But still, though tempted, he refused to  
part,  
And felt the Mother clinging at his heart.

Nor this alone—he, in that weight of care,  
 Had help, and bore it as a man should bear.  
 A drop of comfort in his cup was thrown ;  
 It was his treasure, and it was his own.  
 His Father's shelves contained a motley store  
 Of letter'd wealth ; and this he might explore.  
 A part his mother in her youth had gain'd,  
 A part Nathaniel from his club obtain'd,  
 And part—a well-worn kind—from sire to  
 son remain'd.

He sought his Mother's hoard, and there he  
 found

Romance in sheets, and poetry unbound ;  
 Soft Tales of Love, which never damsel read,  
 But tears of pity stain'd her virgin bed.  
 There were Jane Shore and Rosamond the  
 Fair,

And humbler heroines frail as these were  
 there ;

There was a tale of one forsaken Maid,  
 Who till her death the work of vengeance  
 stay'd ;

Her Lover, then at sea, while round him stood  
 A dauntless crew, the angry ghost pursued ;  
 In a small boat, without an oar or sail,  
 She came to call him, nor would force avail,  
 Nor prayer ; but, conscience-stricken, down  
 he leapt,

And o'er his corse the closing billows slept ;  
 All vanish'd then ! but of the crew were some,  
 Wondering whose ghost would on the morrow  
 come.

A learned Book was there, and in it schemes  
 How to cast Fortunes and interpret Dreams ;  
 Ballads were there of Lover's bliss or bale,  
 The Kitchen Story, and the Nursery Tale.  
 His hungry mind disdain'd not humble food,  
 And read with relish keen of Robin Hood ;  
 Of him, all-powerful made by magic gift,  
 And Giants slain—of mighty Hickerthrift ;  
 Through Crusoe's Isle delighted had he stray'd,  
 Nocturnal visits had to witches paid,  
 Gliding through haunted scenes, enraptured  
 and afraid.

A loftier shelf with real books was graced,  
 Bound, or part bound, and ranged in comely  
 taste ;

Books of high mark, the mind's more solid  
 food,

Which some might think the owner under-  
 stood ;

But Fluxions, Sections, Algebraic lore,  
 Our Peter left for others to explore,

And quickly turning to a favourite kind,  
 Found, what rejoiced him at his heart to find.

Sir Walter wrote not then, or He by whom  
 Such gain and glory to Sir Walter come—  
 That Fairy-Helper, by whose secret aid,  
 Such views of life are to the world convey'd—  
 As inspiration known in after-times,  
 The sole assistant in his prose or rhymes.  
 But there were fictions wild that please the

Boy,

Which men, too, read, condemn, reject,  
 enjoy—

Arabian Nights, and Persian Tales were there,  
 One volume each, and both the worse for wear ;  
 There by Quarles' Emblems, Esop's Fables  
 stood,

The coats in tatters, and the cuts in wood.  
 There, too, 'The English History,' by the pen  
 Of Doctor Cooke, and other learned men,  
 In numbers, sixpence each ; by these was seen,  
 And highly prized, the Monthly Magazine ;—  
 Not such as now will men of taste engage,  
 But the cold gleanings of a former age,  
 Scraps cut from sermons, scenes removed  
 from plays,

With heads of heroes famed in Tyburn's  
 palmy days.

The rest we pass—though Peter pass'd  
 them not,

But here his cares and labours all forgot :  
 Stain'd, torn, and blotted every noble page,  
 Stood the chief poets of a former age—  
 And of the present ; not their works complete,  
 But in such portions as on bulks we meet,  
 The refuse of the shops, thrown down upon  
 the street.

There Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton found a  
 place,

With some a nameless, some a shameless race,  
 Which many a weary walker resting reads,  
 And, pondering o'er the short relief, proceeds,  
 While others lingering pay the written sum,  
 Half loth, but longing for delight to come.

Of the Youth's morals we would something  
 speak ;

Taught by his Mother what to shun or seek :  
 She show'd the heavenly way, and in his youth  
 Press'd on his yielding mind the Gospel truth,  
 How weak is man, how much to ill inclined,  
 And where his help is placed, and how to find.  
 These words of weight sank deeply in his  
 breast,

And awful Fear and holy Hope impress.

He shrank from vice, and at the startling view,  
As from an adder in his path, withdrew.  
All else was cheerful. Peter's easy mind  
To the gay scenes of village life inclined.  
The lark that soaring sings his notes of joy,  
Was not more lively than th' awaken'd boy.  
Yet oft with this a softening sadness dwelt,  
While, feeling thus, he marvel'd why he felt.  
'I am not sorry,' said the Boy, 'but still,  
The tear will drop—I wonder why it will!'

His books, his walks, his musing, morn and eve,  
Gave such impressions as such minds receive;  
And with his moral and religious views  
Wove the wild fancies of an Infant-Muse,  
Inspiring thoughts that he could not express,  
Obscure sublime! his secret happiness.  
Oft would he strive for words, and oft begin  
To frame in verse the views he had within;  
But ever fail'd: for how can words explain  
The uniform'd ideas of a teeming brain?

Such was my Hero, whom I would portray  
In one exploit—the Hero of a Day.

At six miles' distance from his native town  
Stood Silford Hall, a seat of much renown—  
Computed miles, such weary travellers ride,  
When they in chance wayfaring men confide.  
Beauty and grandeur were within; around,  
Lawn, wood, and water; the delicious ground  
Had parks where deer disport, had fields  
where game abound.

Fruits of all tastes in spacious gardens grew;  
And flowers of every scent and every hue,  
That native in more favour'd climes arise,  
Are here protected from th' inclement skies.

To this fair place, with mingled pride and shame,

This lad of learning without knowledge came—  
Shame for his conscious ignorance—and pride  
To this fair seat in this gay style to ride.

The cause that brought him was a small account,

His father's due, and he must take the amount,  
And sign a stamp'd receipt! this done, he might

Look all around him, and enjoy the sight.

So far to walk was, in his mother's view,  
More than her darling Peter ought to do;  
Peter indeed knew more, but he would hide

His better knowledge, for he wish'd to ride;  
So had his father's nag, a beast so small,  
That if he fell, he had not far to fall.

His fond and anxious mother in his best  
Her darling child for the occasion drest:  
All in his coat of green she clothed her boy,  
And stood admiring with a mother's joy:  
Large was it made and long, as meant to do  
For Sunday-service, when he older grew—  
Not brought in daily use in one year's wear  
or two.

White was his waistcoat, and what else he wore

Had clothed the lamb or parent ewe before.  
In all the mother show'd her care or skill;  
A riband black she tied beneath his frill;  
Gave him his stockings, white as driven snow,  
And bade him heed the miry way below;  
On the black varnish of the comely shoe,  
Shone the large buckle of a silvery hue.

Boots he had worn, had he such things  
possest—

But bootless grief!—he was full proudly  
drest;

Full proudly look'd, and light he was of heart,  
When thus for Silford Hall prepared to start.

Nathaniel's self with joy the stipling eyed,  
And gave a shilling with a father's pride;  
Rules of politeness too with pomp he gave,  
And show'd the lad how scholars should behave.

Ere yet he left her home, the Mother told—  
For she had seen—what things he should behold.

There, she related, her young eyes had view'd  
Stone figures shaped like naked flesh and blood,  
Which, in the ball and up the gallery placed,  
Were proofs, they told her, of a noble taste;  
Nor she denied—but, in a public hall,  
Her judgment taken, she had clothed them all.  
There, too, were station'd, each upon its seat,

Half forms of men, without their hands and feet;

These and what more within that hall might be  
She saw, and oh! how long'd her son to see!  
Yet could he hope to view that noble place,  
Who dared not look the porter in the face?

Forth went the pony, and the rider's knees  
Cleaved to her sides—he did not ride with ease;  
One hand a whip, and one a bridle held,  
In case the pony falter'd or rebell'd.

The village boys beheld him as he pass'd,  
And looks of envy on the hero cast;  
But he was meek, nor let his pride appear,  
Nay, truth to speak, he felt a sense of fear,

Lest the rude beast, unmindful of the rein,  
Should take a fancy to turn back again.

He found, and wonder 'tis he found, his  
way,

The orders many that he must obey :

'Now to the right, then left, and now again  
Directly onward, through the winding lane ;  
Then, half way o'er the common, by the mill,  
Turn from the cottage and ascend the hill,  
Then—spare the pony, boy!—as you ascend—  
You see the Hall, and that's your journey's  
end.'

Yes, he succeeded, not remembering aught  
Of this advice, but by his pony taught.  
Soon as he doubted he the bridle threw  
On the steed's neck, and said—'Remember  
you !'

For oft the creature had his father borne,  
Sound on his way, and safe on his return.  
So he succeeded, and the modest youth  
Gave praise, where praise had been assign'd  
by truth.

His business done,—for fortune led his way  
To him whose office was such debts to pay,  
The farmer-bailiff, but he saw no more  
Than a small room, with bare and oaken floor,  
A desk with books thereon—he'd seen such  
things before ;

'Good day !' he said, but lingered as he spoke  
'Good day,' and gazed about with serious  
look ;

Then slowly moved, and then delay'd awhile,  
In dumb dismay which raised a lordly smile  
In those who eyed him—then again moved on,  
As all might see, unwilling to be gone.

While puzzled thus, and puzzling all about,  
Involved, absorb'd, in some bewildering doubt,  
A lady enter'd, Madam Johnson call'd,  
Within whose presence stood the lad appall'd.  
A learned Lady this, who knew the names  
Of all the pictures in the golden frames ;  
Could every subject, every painter, tell,  
And on their merits and their failures dwell ;  
And if perchance there was a slight mistake—  
These the most knowing on such matters  
make.

'And what dost mean, my pretty lad ?'  
she cried,

'Dost stay or go ?'—He first for courage  
tried,

Then for fit words,—then boldly he replied,  
That he would give a hundred pounds, if so  
He had them, all about that house to go ;

For he had heard that it contain'd such things  
As never house could boast, except the king's.

The ruling Lady, smiling, said, 'In truth  
Thou shalt behold them all, my pretty youth.  
Tom ! first the creature to the stable lead,  
Let it be fed ; and you, my child, must feed ;  
For three good hours must pass e'er dinner  
come,'—

'Supper,' thought he, 'she means, our time at  
home.'

First was he feasted to his heart's content,  
Then, all in rapture, with the Lady went ;  
Through rooms immense, and galleries wide  
and tall,

He walk'd entranced—he breathed in Silford  
Hall.

Now could he look on that delightful place,  
The glorious dwelling of a princely race ;  
His vast delight was mixed with equal awe,  
There was such magic in the things he saw.  
Oft standing still, with open mouth and eyes,  
Turn'd here and there, alarm'd as one who  
tries

T' escape from something strange, that would  
before him rise.

The wall would part, and beings without name  
Would come—for such to his adventures came.  
Hence undefined and solemn terror press'd  
Upon his mind, and all his powers possess'd.  
All he had read of magic, every charm,  
Were he alone, might come and do him harm :  
But his gaze rested on his friendly guide—  
'I'm safe,' he thought, 'so long as you abide.'

In one large room was found a bed of state—  
'And can they soundly sleep beneath such  
weight,

Where they may figures in the night explore,  
Form'd by the dim light dancing on the floor  
From the far window ; mirrors broad and high  
Doubling each terror to the anxious eye ?—  
'Tis strange,' thought Peter, 'that such things  
produce

No fear in *her* ; but there is much in use.'

On that reflecting brightness, passing by,  
The Boy one instant fix'd his restless eye—  
And saw himself : he had before descried  
His face in one his mother's store supplied ;  
But here he could his whole dimensions view,  
From the pale forehead to the jet-black shoe.  
Passing he look'd, and looking, grieved to pass  
From the fair figure smiling in the glass.

'Twas so Narcissus saw the boy advance  
In the dear fount, and met th' admiring glance

So loved—But no! our happier boy admired,  
Not the slim form, but what the form  
attired,—

The riband, shirt, and frill, all pure and clean,  
The white ribb'd stockings, and the coat of  
green.

The Lady now appear'd to move away—  
And this was threat'ning; for he dared not  
stay,

Lost and alone; but earnestly he pray'd—  
'Oh! do not leave me—I am not afraid,  
But 'tis so lonesome; I shall never find  
My way alone, no better than the blind.'

The Matron kindly to the Boy replied,  
'Trust in my promise, I will be thy guide.'  
Then to the Chapel moved the friendly pair,  
And well for Peter that his guide was there!  
Dim, silent, solemn was the scene—he felt  
The cedar's power, that so unearthly smelt;  
And then the stain'd, dark, narrow windows  
threw

Strange, partial beams on pulpit, desk, and  
pew:

Upon the altar, glorious to behold,  
Stood a vast pair of candlesticks in gold!  
With candles tall, and large, and firm, and  
white,

Such as the halls of giant-kings would light.  
There was an organ, too, but now unseen;  
A long black curtain served it for a screen;  
Not so the clock, that both by night and day,  
Click'd the short moments as they pass'd  
away.

'Is this a church? and does the parson  
read?—'

Said Peter—'here?—I mean a church in-  
deed.'—

'Indeed it is, or as a church is used,'  
Was the reply,—and Peter deeply mused,  
Not without awe. His sadness to dispel,  
They sought the gallery, and then all was well.

Yet enter'd there, although so clear his  
mind

From every fear substantial and defined,  
Yet there remain'd some touch of native  
fear—

Of something awful to the eye and ear—  
A ghostly voice might sound—a ghost itself  
appear.

There noble Pictures fill'd his mind with  
joy—

He gazed and thought, and was no more the  
boy;

And Madam heard him speak, with some  
surprise,

Of heroes known to him from histories.  
He knew the actors in the deeds of old,—  
He could the Roman marvels all unfold.  
He to his guide a theme for wonder grew,  
At once so little and so much he knew—  
Little of what was passing every day,  
And much of that which long had pass'd  
away;—

So like a man, and yet so like a child,  
That his good friend stood wond'ring as she  
smiled.

The Scripture Pieces caused a serious awe,  
And he with reverence look'd on all he  
saw;

His pious wonder he express'd aloud,  
And at the Saviour Form devoutly bow'd.

Portraits he pass'd, admiring; but with  
pain

Turn'd from some objects, nor would look  
again.

He seem'd to think that something wrong  
was done,

When crimes were shown he blush'd to look  
upon.

Not so his guide—'What youth is that?'  
she cried,

'That handsome stripling at the lady's side;  
Can you inform me how the youth is named?'  
He answer'd, '*Joseph*;' but he look'd  
ashamed.

'Well, and what then? Had you been  
Joseph, boy!

Would you have been so peevish and so coy?'  
Our hero answer'd, with a glowing face,  
'His mother told him he should pray for  
grace.'

A transient cloud o'ercast the matron's brow;  
She seem'd disposed to laugh—but knew  
not how;

Silent awhile, then placid she appear'd—  
''Tis but a child,' she thought, and all was  
clear'd.

No—laugh she could not; still, the more  
she sought

To hide her thoughts, the more of his she  
caught.

A hundred times she had these pictures named,  
And never felt perplex'd, disturb'd, asham'd;  
Yet now the feelings of a lad so young  
Call'd home her thoughts and paralysed her  
tongue.

She pass'd the offensive pictures silent by,  
With one reflecting, self-reproving sigh;  
Reasoning how habit will the mind entice  
To approach and gaze upon the bounds of vice,  
As men, by custom, from some cliff's vast  
height,  
Look pleased, and make their danger their  
delight.

'Come, let us on!—see there a Flemish  
view,

A Country Fair, and all as Nature true.  
See there the merry creatures, great and  
small,

Engaged in drinking, gaming, dancing all,  
Fiddling or fighting—all in drunken joy!—  
'But is this Nature?' said the wondering  
Boy.

'Be sure it is! and those Banditti there—  
Observe the faces, forms, the eyes, the air:  
See rage, revenge, remorse, disdain, despair!'

'And is that Nature, too?' the stripling  
cried.—

'Corrupted Nature,' said the serious guide.

She then display'd her knowledge.—'That,  
my dear,

Is call'd a Titian, this a Guido here,  
And yon a Claude—you see that lovely light,  
So soft and solemn, neither day nor night.'

'Yes!' quoth the Boy, 'and there is just  
the breeze,

That curls the water, and that fans the trees;  
The ships that anchor in that pleasant bay  
All look so safe and quiet—Claude, you say?'

On a small picture Peter gazed and stood  
In admiration—'twas so dearly good.'

'For how much money think you, then, my  
Lad,

Is such a "dear good picture" to be had?

'Tis a famed master's work—a Gerard Dow—  
At least the seller told the buyer so.'

'I tell the price!' quoth Peter—'I as soon  
Could tell the price of pictures in the moon;  
But I have heard, when the great race was  
done,

How much was offer'd for the horse that  
won.'

'A thousand pounds: but, look the country  
round,

And, may be, ten such horses might be found;  
While, ride or run where'er you choose to go,  
You'll nowhere find so fine a Gerard Dow.'

'If this be true,' says Peter, 'then, of course,  
You'd rate the picture higher than the horse.'

'Why, thou'rt a reasoner, Boy!' the lady  
cried;

'But see that Infant on the other side;

'Tis by Sir Joshua. Did you ever see  
A Babe so charming?'—'No, indeed,' said  
he;

'I wonder how he could that look invent,  
That seems so sly, and yet so innocent.'

In this long room were various Statues seen,  
And Peter gazed thereon with awe-struck  
mien.

'Why look so earnest, Boy?'—'Because  
they bring

To me a story of an awful thing.'—

'Tell then thy story.'—He who never stay'd.

For words or matter, instantly obey'd.—

'A holy pilgrim to a city sail'd,

Where every sin o'er sinful men prevail'd;

Who, when he landed, look'd in every street,

As he was wont, a busy crowd to meet;

But now of living beings found he none,  
Death had been there, and turn'd them all to  
stone;

All in an instant, as they were employ'd,

Was life in every living man destroy'd—

The rich, the poor, the timid, and the bold,

Made in a moment such as we behold.'

'Come, my good lad, you've yet a room  
to see.

Are you awake?'—'I am amazed,' said he;

'I know they're figures form'd by human  
skill,

But 'tis so awful, and this place so still!

'And what is this?' said Peter, who had  
seen

A long wide table, with its cloth of green,

Its net-work pockets, and its studs of gold—

For such they seem'd, and precious to behold.

There too were ivory balls, and one was red,

Laid with long sticks upon the soft green bed,

And printed tables, on the wall beside—

'Oh! what are these?' the wondering  
Peter cried.

'This, my good lad, is call'd the Billiard-  
room,'

Answer'd his guide, 'and here the gentry come,  
And with these maces and these cues they

play,

At their spare time, or on a rainy day.'

'And what this chequer'd box?—for play,

I guess?'

'You judge it right; 'tis for the game of  
Chess.

There! take your time, examine what you will,  
 There's King, Queen, Knight,—it is a game of skill:  
 And these are Bishops; you the difference see.'—  
 'What! do they make a game of *them*?' quoth he.—  
 'Bishops, like Kings,' she said, 'are here but names;  
 Not that I answer for their Honours' games.'  
 All round the house did Peter go, and found Food for his wonder all the house around.  
 Thereguns of various bore, and rods, and lines,  
 . And all that man for deed of death designs,  
 In beast, or bird, or fish, or worm, or fly—  
 Life in these last must means of death supply;  
 The living bait is gorged, and both the victims die.  
 'God gives man leave his creatures to destroy.'—  
 'What! for his sport?' replied the pitying Boy.—  
 'Nay,' said the Lady, 'why the sport condemn?  
 As die they must, 'tis much the same to them.'  
 Peter had doubts; but with so kind a friend, He would not on a dubious point contend.  
 Much had he seen, and every thing he saw Excited pleasure not unmix'd with awe.  
 Leaving each room, he turn'd as if once more To enjoy the pleasure that he felt before—  
 'What then must their possessors feel? how grand  
 And happy they who can such joys command!  
 For they may pleasures all their lives pursue, The winter pleasures, and the summer's too—  
 Pleasures for every hour in every day—  
 Oh! how their time must pass in joy away!'—  
 So Peter said.—Replied the courteous Dame:  
 'What you call pleasure scarcely owns the name.  
 The very changes of amusement prove  
 There's nothing that deserves a lasting love.  
 They hunt, they course, they shoot, they fish, they game;  
 The objects vary, though the end the same—  
 A search for that which flies them; no, my Boy!  
 'Tis not enjoyment, 'tis pursuit of joy.'

Peter was thoughtful—thinking, What! not these,  
 Who can command, or purchase, what they please—  
 Whom many serve, who only speak the word,  
 And they have all that earth or seas afford—  
 All that can charm the mind and please the eye—  
 And *they* not happy!—but I'll ask her why.  
 So Peter ask'd.—'Tis not,' she said, 'for us,  
 Their Honours' inward feelings to discuss;  
 But if they're happy, they would still confess  
 'Tis not these things that make their happiness.  
 'Look from this window! at his work behold  
 Yon gardener's helper—he is poor and old,  
 He not one thing of all you see can call  
 His own; but, haply, he o'erlooks them all.  
 Hear him! he whistles through his work, or stops  
 But to admire his labours and his crops:  
 To-day as every former day he fares,  
 And for the morrow has nor doubts nor cares;  
 Pious and cheerful, proud when he can please,  
 Judge if Joe Tompkin wants such things as these.  
 'Come, let us forward!' and she walk'd in haste  
 To a large room, itself a work of taste,  
 But chiefly valued for the works that drew  
 The eyes of Peter—this indeed was new,  
 Was most imposing—Books of every kind  
 Were there disposed, the food for every mind.  
 With joy perplex'd, round cast he wondering eyes,  
 Still in his joy, and dumb in his surprise.  
 Above, beneath, around, on every side,  
 Of every form and size were Books descried;  
 Like Bishop Hatto, when the rats drew near,  
 And war's new dangers waked his guilty fear,  
 When thousands came beside, behind, before,  
 And up and down came on ten thousand more;  
 A tail'd and whisker'd army, each with claws  
 As sharp as needles, and with teeth like saws,—  
 So fill'd with awe, and wonder in his looks,  
 Stood Peter, 'midst this multitude of Books;  
 But guiltless he and fearless; yet he sigh'd  
 To think what treasures were to him denied.  
 But wonder ceases on continued view;  
 And the Boy sharp for close inspection grew.

Prints on the table he at first survey'd,  
Then to the Books his full attention paid.  
At first, from tome to tome, as fancy led,  
He view'd the binding, and the titles read ;  
Lost in delight, and with his freedom pleased,  
Then three huge folios from their shelf he  
seized ;

Fixing on one, with prints of every race,  
Of beast and bird most rare in every place,—  
Serpents, the giants of their tribe, whose prey  
Are giants too—a wild ox once a day ;  
Here the fierce tiger, and the desert's kings,  
And all that move on feet, or fins, or wings—  
Most rare and strange ; a second volume told  
Of battles dire, and dreadful to behold,  
On sea or land, and fleets dispersed in storms ;  
A third has all creative fancy forms,—  
Hydra and dire chimera, deserts rude,  
And ruins grand, enriching solitude :  
Whatever was, or was supposed to be,  
Saw Peter here, and still desired to see.

Again he look'd, but happier had he been,  
That Book of Wonders he had never seen ;  
For there were tales of men of wicked mind,  
And how the Foe of Man deludes mankind.  
Magic and murder every leaf bespread—  
Enchanted halls, and chambers of the dead,  
And ghosts that haunt the scenes where once  
the victims bled.

Just at this time, when Peter's heart began  
To admit the fear that shames the valiant  
man,

He paused—but why ? ' Here's one my guard  
to be ;

When thus protected, none can trouble me :—  
Then rising look'd he round, and lo ! alone  
was he.

Three ponderous doors, with locks of shin-  
ing brass,

Seem'd to invite the trembling Boy to pass ;  
But fear forbade, till fear itself supplied  
The place of courage, and at length he tried.  
He grasp'd the key—Alas ! though great his  
need,

The key turn'd not, the bolt would not recede.  
Try then again ; for what will not distress ?  
Again he tried, and with the same success.  
Yet one remains, remains untried one door—  
A failing hope, for two had fail'd before ;  
But a bold prince, with fifty doors in sight,  
Tried forty-nine before he found the right ;  
Before he mounted on the brazen horse,  
And o'er the walls pursued his airy course.

So his cold hand on this last key he laid :  
' Now turn,' said he ; the treacherous bolt  
obey'd—

The door receded—bringing full in view  
The dim, dull chapel, pulpit, desk, and pew.  
It was not right—it would have vex'd a  
saint ;

And Peter's anger rose above restraint.

' Was this her love,' he cried, ' to bring me  
here,

Among the dead, to die myself with fear !—  
For Peter judg'd, with monuments around,  
The dead must surely in the place be found :

' With cold to shiver, and with hunger pine—  
" We'll see the rooms," she said, " before we  
dine ;"

And spake so kind ! That window gives no  
light :

Here is enough the boldest man to fright ;  
It hardly now is day, and soon it will be  
night.'

Deeply he sigh'd, nor from his heart could  
chase

The dread of dying in that dismal place ;  
Anger and sorrow in his bosom strove,  
And banish'd all that yet remain'd of love ;  
When soon despair had seized the trembling  
Boy,

But hark, a voice ! the sound of peace and joy.

' Where art thou, lad ?—' ' Oh ! here am  
I, in doubt,

And sorely frighten'd—can you let me out ? '

' Oh ! yes, my child ; it was indeed a sin,  
Forgetful as I was, to bolt you in.

I left you reading, and from habit lock'd  
The door behind me, but in truth am shock'd  
To serve you thus ; but we will make amends  
For such mistake. Come, cheerly, we are  
friends.'

' Oh ! yes,' said Peter, quite alive to be  
So kindly used, and have so much to see,  
And having so much seen ; his way he spied,  
Forgot his peril, and rejoind'd his guide.

Now all beheld, his admiration raised,  
The lady thank'd, her condescension praised,  
And fix'd the hour for dinner, forth the Boy  
Went in a tumult of o'erpowering joy,  
To view the gardens, and what more was  
found

In the wide circuit of that spacious ground,  
Till, with his thoughts bewilder'd, and  
oppress'd

With too much feeling, he inclined to rest.



Then in the park he sought its deepest shade,  
 By trees more aged than the mansion made,  
 That ages stood ; and there unseen a brook  
 Ran not unheard, and thus our traveller  
 Spoke,—  
 ‘ I am so happy, and have such delight,  
 I cannot bear to see another sight ;  
 It wearies one like work ;’ and so, with  
 deep  
 Unconscious sigh—he laid him down to sleep.  
 Thus he reclining slept, and, oh ! the joy  
 That in his dreams possess’d the happy boy,—  
 Composed of all he knew, and all he read,  
 Heard, or conceived, the living and the dead.  
 The Caliph Haroun, walking forth by night  
 To see young David and Goliath fight,  
 Rose on his passive fancy—then appear’d  
 The fleshless forms of beings scorn’d or fear’d  
 By just or evil men—the baneful race  
 Of spirits restless, borne from place to place :  
 Rivers of blood from conquer’d armies ran,  
 The flying steed was by, the marble man ;  
 Then danced the fairies round their pygmy  
 queen,  
 And their feet twinkled on the dewy green,  
 All in the moon-beams’ glory. As they  
 fled,  
 The mountain loadstone rear’d its fatal head,  
 And drew the iron-bolted ships on shore,  
 Where he distinctly heard the billows roar,—  
 Mix’d with a living voice of—‘ Youngster,  
 sleep no more,  
 But haste to dinner.’ Starting from the  
 ground,  
 The waking boy obey’d that welcome sound.  
 He went and sat, with equal shame and  
 pride,  
 A welcome guest at Madam Johnson’s side.  
 At his right hand was Mistress Kitty placed,  
 And Lucy, maiden sly, the stripling faced.  
 Then each the proper seat at table took—  
 Groom, butler, footman, laundress, coach-  
 man, cook ;  
 For all their station and their office knew,  
 Nor sat as rustics or the rabble do.  
 The Youth to each the due attention paid,  
 And hob-or-nob’d with Lady Charlotte’s  
 maid ;  
 With much respect each other they address’d,  
 And all encouraged their enchanted guest.

Wine, fruit, and sweetmeats closed repast so  
 long,  
 And Mistress Flora sang an opera song.  
 Such was the Day the happy Boy had spent,  
 And forth delighted from the Hall he went ;  
 Bowing his thanks, he mounted on his steed,  
 More largely fed than he was wont to feed ;  
 And well for Peter that his pony knew  
 From whence he came, the road he should  
 pursue ;  
 For the young rider had his mind estranged  
 From all around, disturbed and disarranged,  
 In pleasing tumult, in a dream of bliss,  
 Enjoy’d but seldom in a world like this.  
 But though the pleasures of the Day were  
 past,—  
 For lively pleasures are not form’d to last,—  
 And though less vivid they became, less  
 strong,  
 Through life they lived, and were enjoy’d as  
 long.  
 So deep the impression of that happy Day,  
 Not time nor cares could wear it all away ;  
 Ev’n to the last, in his declining years,  
 He told of all his glories, all his fears.  
 How blithely forward in that morn he went,  
 How blest the hours in that fair palace spent,  
 How vast that Mansion, sure for monarch  
 plann’d,  
 The rooms so many, and yet each so grand,—  
 Millions of books in one large hall were found,  
 And glorious pictures every room around ;  
 Beside that strangest of the wonders there,  
 That house itself contain’d a house of prayer.  
 He told of park and wood, of sun and shade,  
 And how the lake below the lawn was made :  
 He spake of feasting such as never boy,  
 Taught in his school, was fated to enjoy—  
 Of ladies’ maids as ladies’ selves who dress’d,  
 And her, his friend, distinguish’d from the  
 rest,  
 By grandeur in her look, and state that she  
 possess’d.  
 He pass’d not one ; his grateful mind o’er-  
 flow’d  
 With sense of all he felt, and they bestow’d.  
 He spake of every office, great or small,  
 Within, without, and spake with praise of  
 all—  
 So pass’d the happy Boy, that Day at Silford  
 Hall.

## TALE II. THE FAMILY OF LOVE

In a large town, a wealthy thriving place,  
Where hopes of gain excite an anxious race;  
Which dark dense wreaths of cloudy volumes  
cloak,

And mark, for leagues around, the place of  
smoke;

Where fire to water lends its powerful aid,  
And steam produces—strong ally to trade:—  
Arrived a Stranger, whom no merchant knew,  
Nor could conjecture what he came to do:  
He came not there his fortune to amend,  
He came not there a fortune made to spend;  
His age not that which men in trade employ:  
The place not that where men their wealth  
enjoy;

Yet there was something in his air that told  
Of competency gain'd, before the man was old.  
He brought no servants with him: those he  
sought

Were soon his habits and his manners  
taught—

His manners easy, civil, kind, and free;  
His habits such as aged men's will be;  
To self indulgent; wealthy men like him  
Plead for these failings—'tis their way, their  
whim.

His frank good-humour, his untroubled air,  
His free address, and language bold but fair,  
Soon made him friends—such friends as all  
may make,

Who take the way that he was pleased to take.  
He gave his dinners in a handsome style,  
And met his neighbours with a social smile;  
The wealthy all their easy friend approved,  
Whom the more liberal for his bounty loved;  
And ev'n the cautious and reserved began  
To speak with kindness of the frank old man,  
Who, though associate with the rich and  
grave,

Laugh'd with the gay, and to the needy gave  
What need requires. At church a seat was  
shown,

That he was kindly ask'd to think his own:  
Thither he went, and neither cold nor heat,  
Pains or pretences, kept him from his seat.  
This to his credit in the town was told,  
And ladies said, 'Tis pity he is old:  
Yet, for his years, the Stranger moves like one  
Who, of his race, has no small part to run.'

No envy he by ostentation raised,  
And all his hospitable table praised.  
His quiet life censorious talk suppress'd,  
And numbers hail'd him as their welcome  
guest.

'Twas thought a man so mild, and boun-  
teous too,  
A world of good within the town might do;  
To vote him honours, therefore, they inclined;  
But these he sought not, and with thanks  
resign'd;

His days of business he declared were past,  
And he would wait in quiet for the last;  
But for a dinner and a day of mirth  
He was the readiest being upon earth.

Men call'd him Captain, and they found the  
name

By him accepted without pride or shame.  
Not in the Navy—that did not appear:  
Not in the Army—that at least was clear—  
'But as he speaks of sea-affairs, he made,  
No doubt, his fortune in the way of trade;  
He might, perhaps, an India-ship command—  
We'll call him *Captain* now he comes to land.'

The stranger much of various life had  
seen,

Been poor, been rich, and in the state  
between;

Had much of kindness met, and much deceit,  
And all that man who deals with men must  
meet.

Not much he read; but from his youth had  
thought,

And been by care and observation taught:  
'Tis thus a man his own opinions makes;  
He holds that fast; which he with trouble  
takes:

While one whose notions all from books arise,  
Upon his authors, not himself, relies—  
A borrow'd wisdom this, that does not make  
us wise.

Inured to scenes, where wealth and place  
command

Th' observant eye, and the obedient hand,  
A Tory-spirit his—he ever paid  
Obedience due, and look'd to be obey'd.  
'Man upon man depends, and, break the  
chain,

He soon returns to savage life again;

As of fair virgins dancing in a round,  
Each binds another, and herself is bound,  
On either hand a social tribe he sees,  
By those assisted, and assisting these ;  
While to the general welfare all belong,  
The high in power, the low in number strong.'

Such was the Stranger's creed—if not profound,

He judg'd it useful, and proclaimed it sound ;  
And many liked it : invitations went

To Captain Elliot, and from him were sent—  
These last so often, that his friends confess'd,

The Captain's cook had not a place of rest.  
Still were they something at a loss to guess

What his profession was from his address ;  
For much he knew, and too correct was he

For a man train'd and nurtured on the sea ;  
Yet well he knew the seaman's words and

ways,—

Seaman's his look, and nautical his phrase :  
In fact, all ended just where they began,

With many a doubt of this amphibious man.  
Though kind to all, he look'd with special

grace

On a few members of an ancient race,  
Long known, and well respected in the place :

Dyson their name ; but how regard for these  
Rose in his mind, or why they seem'd to

please,  
Or by what ways, what virtues—not a cause

Can we assign, for Fancy has no laws ;  
But, as the Captain show'd them such respect,

We will not treat the Dysons with neglect.  
Their Father died while yet engaged by

trade  
To make a fortune, that was never made,

But to his children taught ; for he would say  
' I place them—all I can—in Fortune's

way.'  
James was his first-born ; when his father

died,  
He, in their large domain, the place supplied,

And found, as to the Dysons all appear'd,  
Affairs less gloomy than their sire had fear'd ;

But then if rich or poor, all now agree,  
Frugal and careful, James must wealthy be :

And wealth in wedlock sought, he married  
soon,

And ruled his Lady from the honey-moon :  
Nor shall we wonder ; for, his house beside,

He had a sturdy multitude to guide,  
Who now his spirit vex'd, and now his temper

tried ;

Men who by labours live, and, day by day,  
Work, weave, and spin their active lives  
away :

Like bees industrious, they for others strive,  
With, now and then, some murmuring in the  
hive.

James was a churchman—'twas his pride  
and boast ;

Loyal his heart, and ' Church and King ' his  
toast ;

He for Religion might not warmly feel,  
But for the Church he had abounding zeal.

Yet no dissenting sect would he condemn,  
' They're nought to us,' said he, ' nor we to  
them ;

'Tis innovation of our own I hate,  
Whims and inventions of a modern date.

' Why send you Bibles all the world about,  
That men may read amiss, and learn to doubt ?

Why teach the children of the poor to read,  
That a new race of doubters may succeed ?

Now can you scarcely rule the stubborn crew,  
And what if they should know as much as

you ?

Will a man labour when to learning bred,  
Or use his hands who can employ his head ?

Will he a clerk or master's self obey,  
Who thinks himself as well-inform'd as they ?'

These were his favourite subjects—these he  
chose,

And where he ruled no creature durst oppose.  
' We are rich,' quoth James ; ' but if we

thus proceed,  
And give to all, we shall be poor indeed :

In war we subsidise the world—in peace  
We christianise—our bounties never cease :

We learn each stranger's tongue, that they  
with ease

May read translated Scriptures, if they please ;  
We buy them presses, print them books, and

then

Pay and export poor, learned, pious men ;  
Vainly we strive a fortune now to get,

So tax'd by private claims, and public debt.'  
Still he proceeds—' You make your prisons

light,  
Airy and clean, your robbers to invite ;

And in such ways your pity show to vice,  
That you the rogues encourage, and entice.'

For lenient measures James had no re-  
gard—

' Hardship,' he said, ' must work upon the  
hard ;

Labour and chains such desperate men require ;

To soften iron you must use the fire.'

Active himself, he labour'd to express,  
In his strong words, his scorn of idleness ;  
From him in vain the beggar sought relief—  
' Who will not labour is an idle thief,  
Stealing from those who will ; ' he knew not how

For the untaught and ill-taught to allow,  
Children of want and vice, inured to ill,  
Unchain'd the passions, and uncurb'd the will.

Alas ! he look'd but to his own affairs,  
Or to the rivals in his trade, and theirs :  
Knew not the thousands who must all be fed,  
Yet ne'er were taught to earn their daily bread ;

Whom crimes, misfortunes, errors only teach  
To seek their food where'er within their reach,  
Who for their parents' sins, or for their own,  
Are now as vagrants, wanderers, beggars known,

Hunted and hunting through the world, to share

Alms and contempt, and shame and scorn to bear ;

Whom Law condemns, and Justice, with a sigh,

Pursuing, shakes her sword and passes by.—  
If to the prison we should these commit,  
They for the gallows will be render'd fit.

But James had virtues—was esteem'd as one

Whom men look'd up to, and relied upon.  
Kind to his equals, social when they met—

If out of spirits, always out of debt ;  
True to his promise, he a lie disdain'd,

And e'en when tempted in his trade, refrain'd ;  
Frugal he was, and loved the cash to spare,  
Gain'd by much skill, and nursed by constant care ;

Yet liked the social board, and when he spoke,  
Some hail'd his wisdom, some enjoy'd his joke.

To him a Brother look'd as one to whom,  
If fortune frown'd, he might in trouble come ;  
His Sisters view'd the important man with awe,

As if a parent in his place they saw :  
All lived in Love ; none sought their private ends ;

The Dysons were a Family of Friends.

His brother David was a studious boy,  
Yet could his sports as well as books enjoy.  
E'en when a boy, he was not quickly read,  
If by the heart you judged him, or the head.  
His father thought he was decreed to shine,  
And he in time an eminent Divine ;  
But if he ever to the Church inclined,  
It is too certain that he changed his mind.  
He spoke of scruples, but who knew him best  
Affirm'd, no scruples broke on David's rest.  
Physic and Law were each in turn proposed—  
He weigh'd them nicely, and with Physic closed.

He had a serious air, a smooth address,  
And a firm spirit that ensured success.

He watched his brethren of the time, how they  
Rose into fame, that he might choose his way.

Some, he observed, a kind of roughness used,

And now their patients banter'd, now abused :  
The awe-struck people were at once dismay'd,  
As if they begg'd the advice for which they paid.

There are who hold that no disease is slight,  
Who magnify the foe with whom they fight.  
The sick was told that his was that disease  
But rarely known on mortal frame to seize ;  
Which only skill profound, and full command  
Of all the powers in nature could withstand.  
Then, if he lived, what fame the conquest gave !

And if he died—' No human power could save ! '

Mere fortune sometimes, and a lucky case,  
Will make a man the idol of a place—

Who last, advice to some fair duchess gave,  
Or snatch'd a widow's darling from the grave,  
Him first she honours of the lucky tribe,  
Fills him with praise, and woos him to pre-  
scribe.

In his own chariot soon he rattles on,  
And half believes the lies that built him one.

But not of these was David : care and pain,  
And studious toil prepar'd his way to gain.

At first observed, then trusted, he became  
At length respected, and acquired a name.

Keen, close, attentive, he could read mankind,  
The feeble body, and the failing mind ;

And if his heart remain'd untouch'd, his eyes,  
His air, and tone, with all could sympathise.

This brought him fees, and not a man was he

In weak compassion to refuse a fee.

Yet though the Doctor's purse was well supplied,

Though patients came, and fees were multiplied,

Some secret drain, that none presumed to know,

And few e'en guess'd, for ever kept it low.

Some of a patient spake, a tender fair,  
Of whom the doctor took peculiar care,  
But not a fee : he rather largely gave,  
Nor spared himself, 'twas said, this gentle friend to save.

Her case consumptive, with perpetual need  
Still to be fed, and still desire to feed ;

An eager craving, seldom known to cease,  
And gold alone brought temporary peace.—

So, rich he was not ; James some fear express'd,

Dear Doctor David would be yet distress'd ;  
For if now poor, when so repaid his skill,  
What fate were his, if he himself were ill !

In his religion, Doctor Dyson sought  
To teach himself—' A man should not be taught,

Should not, by forms or creeds, his mind debase,

That keep in awe an unreflecting race.'

He heeded not what Clarke and Paley say,  
But thought himself as good a judge as they ;

Yet to the Church profess'd himself a friend,  
And would the rector for his hour attend ;  
Nay, praise the learn'd discourse, and  
learnedly defend.

For since the common herd of men are blind,  
He judg'd it right that guides should be assign'd ;

And that the few who could themselves direct  
Should treat those guides with honour and respect.

He was from all contracted notions freed,  
But gave his Brother credit for his creed ;  
And if in smaller matters he indulg'd,  
'Twas well, so long as they were not divulg'd.

Oft was the spirit of the Doctor tried,  
When his grave Sister wish'd to be his guide.  
She told him, 'all his real friends were grieved

To hear it said, how little he believed :  
Of all who bore the name she never knew  
One to his pastor or his church untrue ;  
All have the truth with mutual zeal profess'd,  
And why, dear Doctor, differ from the rest ?'

' 'Tis my hard fate,' with serious looks replied

The man of doubt, 'to err with such a guide.'

'Then why not turn from such a painful state ?'

The doubting man replied, 'It is my fate.'  
Strong in her zeal, by texts and reasons back'd,

In his grave mood the Doctor she attack'd :  
Cull'd words from Scripture to announce his doom,

And bade him 'think of dreadful things to come.'

'If such,' he answer'd, 'be that state untried,

In peace, dear Martha, let me here abide ;  
Forbear to insult a man whose fate is known,  
And leave to Heaven a matter all its own.'

In the same cause the Merchant, too, would strive ;

He ask'd, 'Did ever unbeliever thrive ?  
Had he respect ? could he a fortune make ?

And why not then such impious men forsake ?'  
'Thanks, my dear James, and be assured I feel,

If not your reason, yet at least your zeal ;  
And when those wicked thoughts, that keep me poor,

And bar respect, assail me as before  
With force combin'd, you'll drive the fiend away,

For you shall reason, James, and Martha pray.'  
But though the Doctor could reply with ease

To all such trivial arguments as these,—  
Though he could reason, or at least deride,  
There was a power that would not be defied ;  
A closer reasoner, whom he could not shun,  
Could not refute, from whom he could not run ;  
For Conscience lived within ; she slept, 'tis true,

But when she waked, her pangs awaken'd too.  
She bade him think ; and as he thought, a sigh  
Of deep remorse precluded all reply.

No soft insulting smile, no bitter jest,  
Could this commanding power of strength divest,

But with reluctant fear her terrors he confess'd.

His weak advisers he could scorn or slight,  
But not their cause ; for, in their folly's spite,  
They took the wiser part, and chose their way aright.

Such was the Doctor, upon whom for aid  
Had some good ladies call'd, but were  
afraid—

Afraid of one who, if report were just,  
The arm of flesh, and that alone would trust.  
But these were few—the many took no care  
Of what they judged to be his own affair :  
And if he them from their diseases freed,  
They neither cared nor thought about his  
creed :

They said his merits would for much atone,  
And only wonder'd that he lived alone.

The widow'd Sister near the Merchant dwelt,  
And her late loss with lingering sorrow felt.  
Small was her jointure, and o'er this she sigh'd,  
That to her heart its bounteous wish denied,  
Which yet all common wants, but not her all,  
supplied.

Sorrows like showers descend, and as the  
heart

For them prepares, they good or ill impart ;  
Some on the mind, as on the ocean rain,  
Fall and disturb, but soon are lost again—  
Some, as to fertile lands, a boon bestow,  
And seed, that else had perish'd, live and  
grow ;

Some fall on barren soil, and thence proceed  
The idle blossom, and the useless weed ;  
But how her griefs the Widow's heart im-  
press'd,

Must from the tenor of her life be guess'd.

Rigid she was, persisting in her grief,  
Fond of complaint, and adverse to relief.  
In her religion she was all severe,  
And as she was, was anxious to appear.  
When sorrow died restraint usurp'd the place,  
And sate in solemn state upon her face,  
Reading she loved not, nor would design to  
waste

Her precious time on trifling works of taste ;  
Though what she did with all that precious  
time

We know not, but to waste it was a crime—  
As oft she said, when with a serious friend  
She spent the hours as duty bids us spend ;  
To read a novel was a kind of sin—  
Albeit once Clarissa took her in ;  
And now of late she heard with much sur-  
prise,

Novels there were that made a compromise  
Betwixt amusement and religion ; these  
Might charm the worldly, whom the stories  
please,

And please the serious, whom the sense  
would charm,

And thus indulging, be secured from harm—  
A happy thought, when from the foe we take  
His arms, and use them for religion's sake.

Her Bible she perused by day, by night ;  
It was her task—she said 'twas her delight ;  
Found in her room, her chamber, and her pew,  
For ever studied, yet for ever new—  
All must be new that we cannot retain,  
And new we find it when we read again.

The hardest texts she could with ease  
expound,

And meaning for the most mysterious found,  
Knew which of dubious senses to prefer :  
The want of Greek was not a want in her ;—  
Instinctive light no aid from Hebrew needs—  
But full conviction without study breeds ;  
O'er mortal powers by inborn strength pre-  
vail,

Where Reason trembles, and where Learning  
fails.

To the church strictly from her childhood  
bred,

She now her zeal with party-spirit fed :  
For brother James she lively hopes express'd,  
But for the Doctor's safety felt distress'd ;  
And her light Sister, poor, and deaf, and blind,  
Fill'd her with fears of most tremendous kind.  
But David mocked her for the pains she took,  
And Fanny gave resentment for rebuke ;  
While James approved the zeal, and praised  
the call,

' That brought,' he said, ' a blessing on them  
all :

Goodness like this to all the House extends,  
For were they not a Family of Friends ? '

Their sister Frances, though her prime was  
past,

Had beauty still—nay, beauty form'd to last ;  
'Twas not the lily and the rose combined,  
Nor must we say the beauty of the mind ;  
But feature, form, and that engaging air,  
That lives when ladies are no longer fair.  
Lovers she had, as she remember'd yet,  
For who the glories of their reign forget ?  
Some she rejected in her maiden pride  
And some in maiden hesitation tried,  
Unwilling to renounce, unable to decide.

One lost, another would her grace implore,  
Till all were lost, and lovers came no more :  
Nor had she that, in beauty's failing state,  
Which will recall a lover, or create

Hers was the slender portion, that supplied  
Her real wants, but all beyond denied.

When Fanny Dyson reach'd her fortieth  
year,

She would no more of love or lovers hear ;  
But one dear Friend she chose, her guide, her  
stay ;

And to each other all the world were they ;  
For all the world had grown to them unkind,  
One sex censorious, and the other blind.

The Friend of Frances longer time had known  
The world's deceits, and from its follies flown.  
With her dear Friend life's sober joys to share,

Was all that now became her wish and care.  
They walk'd together, they conversed and  
read,

And tender tears for well-feign'd sorrows shed:  
And were so happy in their quiet lives,  
They pitied sighing maids, and weeping wives.

But Fortune to our state such change  
imparts,

That Pity stays not long in human hearts ;  
When sad for others' woes our hearts are  
grown,

This soon gives place to sorrows of our own.

There was among our guardian Volunteers  
A Major Bright—he reckoned fifty years :

A reading man of peace, but call'd to take  
His sword and musket for his country's sake ;  
Not to go forth and fight, but here to stay,  
Invaders, should they come, to chase or slay.

Him had the elder Lady long admired,  
As one from vain and trivial things retired ;  
With him conversed ; but to a Friend so dear,  
Gave not that pleasure—Why ? is not so  
clear ;

But chance effected this : the Major now  
Gave both the time his duties would allow ;  
In walks, in visits, when abroad, at home,  
The friendly Major would to either come.  
He never spoke—for he was not a boy—  
Of ladies' charms, or lovers' grief and joy.  
All his discourses were of serious kind,  
The heart they touch'd not, but they fill'd  
the mind.

Yet—oh, the pity ! from this grave good man  
The cause of coolness in the Friends began.  
The sage Sophronia—that the chosen name—  
Now more polite, and more estranged became.  
She could but feel that she had longer known  
This valued friend—he was indeed her own ;  
But Frances Dyson, to confess the truth,  
Had more of softness—yes, and more of youth ;

And though he said such things had ceased  
to please,

The worthy Major was not blind to these :  
So without thought, without intent, he paid  
More frequent visits to the younger Maid.

Such the offence ; and though the Major  
tried

To tie again the knot he thus untied,  
His utmost efforts no kind looks repaid,—  
He moved no more the inexorable maid.

The Friends too parted, and the elder told  
Tales of false hearts, and friendships waxing  
cold ;

And wonder'd what a man of sense could see  
In the light airs of wither'd vanity.

'Tis said that Frances now the world re-  
views,

Unwilling all the little left to lose ;  
She and the Major on the walks are seen,  
And all the world is wondering what they  
mean.

Such were the four whom Captain Elliot drew  
To his own board, as the selected few.

For why ? they seem'd each other to approve,  
And called themselves a Family of Love.

These were not all : there was a Youth  
beside,

Left to his uncles when his parents died :  
A Girl, their sister, by a Boy was led  
To Scotland, where a boy and girl may wed—  
And they return'd to seek for pardon, pence,  
and bread.

Five years they lived to labour, weep, and  
pray,

When Death, in mercy, took them both away.

Uncles and aunts received this lively child,  
Grieved at his fate, and at his follies smiled ;  
But when the child to boy's estate grew on,  
The smile was vanish'd, and the pity gone.  
Slight was the burden, but in time increased,  
Until at length both love and pity ceased.  
Then Tom was idle ; he would find his way  
To his aunt's stores, and make her sweets his  
prey :

By uncle Doctor on a message sent,  
He stopp'd to play, and lost it as he went.  
His grave aunt Martha, with a frown austere,  
And a rough hand, produced a transient fear ;  
But Tom, to whom his rude companions taught  
Language as rude, vindictive measures sought ;  
He used such words, that when she wish'd to  
speak

Of his offence, she had her words to seek.

The little wretch had call'd her—'twas a shame  
To think such thought, and more to name  
such name.

Thus fed and beaten, Tom was taught to pray  
For his true friends: 'but who,' said he,  
'are they?'

By nature kind, when kindly used, the Boy  
Hail'd the strange good with tears of love  
and joy;

But, roughly used, he felt his bosom burn  
With wrath he dared not on his uncles turn;  
So with indignant spirit, still and strong,  
He nursed the vengeance, and endured the  
wrong.

To a cheapschool, far north, the boy was sent:  
Without a tear of love or grief he went;  
Where, doom'd to fast and study, fight and  
play,  
He stayed five years, and wish'd five more to  
stay.

He loved o'er plains to run, up hills to climb,  
Without a thought of kindred, home, or time;  
Till from the cabin of a coasting hoy,  
Landed at last the thin and freckled boy,  
With sharp keen eye, but pale and hollow  
cheek,

All made more sad from sickness of a week.  
His aunts and uncles felt—nor strove to hide  
From the poor boy, their pity and their pride:  
He had been taught that he had not a friend,  
Save these on earth, on whom he might  
depend;

And such dependence upon these he had,  
As made him sometimes desperate, always  
sad.

'Awkward and weak, where can the lad be  
placed,

And we not troubled, censured, or disgraced?  
Do, Brother James, th' unhappy boy enrol  
Among your set; you only can control.'  
James sigh'd, and Thomas to the Factory  
went,

Who there his days in sundry duties spent.  
He ran, he wrought, he wrote—to read or play  
He had no time, nor much to feed or pray.  
What pass'd without he heard not—or he  
heard

Without concern, what he nor wish'd nor  
fear'd;

Told of the Captain and his wealth, he sigh'd  
And said, 'how well his table is supplied:'

But with the sigh it caused the sorrow fled;  
He was not feasted, but he must be fed,  
And he could sleep full sound, though not full  
soft his bed.

But still, ambitious thoughts his mind  
possess'd,  
And dreams of joy broke in upon his rest.  
Improved in person, and enlarged in mind,  
The good he found not he could hope to find.  
Though now enslaved, he hail'd the approach-  
ing day,  
When he should break his chains and flee  
away.

Such were the Dysons: they were first of  
those

Whom Captain Elliot as companions chose;  
Them he invited, and the more approved,  
As it appear'd that each the other loved.

Proud of their brothers were the sister pair,  
And if not proud, yet kind the brothers were.  
This pleased the Captain, who had never  
known,

Or he had loved, such kindred of his own:  
Them he invited, save the Orphan lad,  
Whose name was not the one his Uncles had;  
No Dyson he, nor with the party came—  
The worthy Captain never heard his name;  
Uncles and Aunts forbore to name the boy,  
For then, of course, must follow his employ.  
Though all were silent, as with one consent,  
None told another what his silence meant,  
What hers; but each suppress'd the useless  
truth,

And not a word was mention'd of the youth.

Familiar grown, the Dysons saw their host,  
With none beside them: it became their  
boast,

Their pride, their pleasure; but to some it  
seem'd

Beyond the worth their talents were esteem'd.  
This wrought no change within the Captain's  
mind;

To all men courteous, he to them was kind.

One day with these he sat, and only  
these,

In a light humour, talking at his ease:  
Familiar grown, he was disposed to tell  
Of times long past, and what in them befell—  
Not of his life their wonder to attract,  
But the choice tale, or insulated fact.  
Then, as it seem'd, he had acquired a right  
To hear what they could from their stores  
recite.



Their lives, they said, were all of common kind ;

He could no pleasure in such trifles find.

They had an Uncle—'tis their father's tale—

Who in all seas had gone where ship can sail,  
Who in all lands had been, where men can live ;

'He could indeed some strange relations give,  
And many a bold adventure ; but in vain  
We look for him ; he comes not home again.'

'And is it so ? why then, if so it be,'

Said Captain Elliot, 'you must look to me :  
I knew John Dyson'—Instant every one  
Was moved to wonder—'knew my Uncle John !

Can he be rich ? be childless ? he is old,  
That is most certain—What ! can more be told ?

Will he return, who has so long been gone,  
And lost to us ? Oh ! what of Uncle John ?

This was aside : their unobservant friend  
Seem'd on their thoughts but little to attend ;  
A traveller speaking, he was more inclined  
To tell his story than their thoughts to find.

'Although, my Friends, I love you well,  
'tis true,

'Twas your relation turn'd my mind to you ;  
For we were friends of old, and friends like us  
are few ;

And though from dearest friends a man will hide

His private vices in his native pride,  
Yet such our friendship from its early rise,  
We no reserve admitted, no disguise ;  
But 'tis the story of my friend I tell,  
And to all others let me bid farewell.

'Take each your glass, and you shall hear  
how John,

My old companion, through the world has gone ;

I can describe him to the very life,  
Him and his ways, his ventures, and his wife.'

'Wife !' whisper'd all ; 'then what his life to us,

His ways and ventures, if he ventured thus ?'  
This, too, apart ; yet were they all intent,  
And, gravely listening, sigh'd with one consent.

'My friend, your Uncle, was design'd for trade,

To make a fortune as his father made ;  
But early he perceived the house declined,  
And his domestic views at once resign'd ;

While stout of heart, with life in every limb,  
He would to sea, and either sink or swim.

No one forbade ; his father shook his hand,  
Within it leaving what he could command.

'He left his home, but I will not relate  
What storms he braved, and how he bore his fate,

Till his brave frigate was a Spanish prize,  
And prison-walls received his first-born sighs,  
Sighs for the freedom that an English boy,  
Or English man, is eager to enjoy.

'Exchanged, he breathed in freedom, and aboard

An English ship, he found his peace restored ;  
Warraged around, each British tar was press'd  
To serve his king, and John among the rest ;  
Oft had he fought and bled, and 'twas his fate  
In that same ship to grow to man's estate.  
Again 'twas war : of France a ship appear'd  
Of greater force, but neither shunned nor fear'd ;

'Twas in the Indian Sea, the land was nigh,  
When all prepared to fight, and some to die ;  
Man after man was in the ocean thrown,  
Limb after limb was to the surgeon shown,  
And John at length, poor John ! held forth  
his own.—

'A tedious case—the battle ceased with day,  
And in the night the foe had slipp'd away.  
Of many wounded were a part convey'd  
To land, and he among the number laid ;  
Poor, suffering, friendless, who shall now  
impart

Life to his hope, or comfort to his heart ?  
A kind good priest among the English there  
Selected him as his peculiar care ;  
And, when recover'd, to a powerful friend  
Was pleased the lad he loved to recommend ;  
Who read your Uncle's mind, and, pleased to read,

Placed him where talents will in time succeed.

'I will not tease you with details of trade,  
But say he there a decent fortune made,—  
Not such as gave him, if return'd, to buy  
A duke's estate, or principality,

But a fair fortune : years of peace he knew,  
That were so happy, and that seem'd so few.

'Then came a cloud ; for who on earth  
has seen

A changeless fortune, and a life serene ?

Ah ! then how joyous were the hours we spent !

But joy is restless, joy is not content.

'There one resided, who, to serve his friend,  
Was pleased a gay fair lady to commend ;  
Was pleased t' invite the happy man to dine,  
And introduced the subject o'er their wine ;  
Was pleased the lady his good friend should  
know,

And as a secret his regard would show.

'A modest man lacks courage ; but, thus  
train'd,

Your Uncle sought her favour and obtain'd :  
To me he spake, enraptured with her face,  
Her angel smile, her unaffected grace ;  
Her fortune small indeed ; but "curse the pelf,  
"She is a glorious fortune in herself !"

"John !" answer'd I, "friend John, to be  
sincere,

These are fine things, but may be bought too  
dear.

You are no stripling, and, it must be said,  
Have not the form that charms a youthful  
maid.

What you possess, and what you leave behind,  
When you depart, may captivate her mind ;  
And I suspect she will rejoice at heart,  
Your will once made, if you should soon  
depart."

'Long our debate, and much we disagreed ;  
"You need no wife," I said—said he, "I need ;  
I want a house, I want in all I see  
To take an interest ; what is mine to me ?"  
So spake the man, who to his word was just,  
And took the words of others upon trust.  
He could not think that friend in power so  
high,

So much esteem'd, could like a villain lie ;  
Nor, till the knot, the fatal knot, was tied,  
Had urged his wedding a dishonour'd bride.  
The man he challenged, for his heart was  
rent

With rage and grief, and was to prison sent ;  
For men in power—and this, alas ! was one—  
Revenge on all, the wrongs themselves have  
done ;

And he whose spirit bends not to the blow  
The tyrants strike, shall no forgiveness know,  
For 'tis to slaves alone that tyrants favour  
show.

'This cost him much ; but that he did not  
heed ;

The lady died, and my poor friend was freed.  
"Enough of ladies !" then said he, and  
smiled ;

"I've now no longings for a neighbour's child."

So patient he return'd, and not in vain,  
To his late duties, and grew rich again.  
He was no miser ; but the man who takes  
Care to be rich, will love the gain he makes :  
Pursuing wealth, he soon forgot his woes,  
No acts of his were bars to his repose.

'Now John was rich, and old and weary  
grown,

Talk'd of the country that he calls his own,  
And talk'd to me ; for now, in fact, began  
My better knowledge of the real man.

Though long estranged, he felt a strong desire,  
That made him for his former friends enquire ;  
What Dysons yet remain'd, he long'd to  
know,

And doubtless meant some proofs of love to  
show.

His purpose known, our native land I sought,  
And with the wishes of my Friend am fraught.'

Fix'd were all eyes, suspense each bosom  
shook,

And expectation hung on every look.

"Go to my kindred, seek them all around,  
Find all you can, and tell me all that's found ;  
Seek them if prosperous, seek them in distress,  
Hear what they need, know what they all  
possess ;

What minds, what hearts they have, how good  
they are,

How far from goodness—speak, and no one  
spare,

And no one slander : let me clearly see  
What is in them, and what remains for me."

'Such is my charge, and haply I shall  
send

Tidings of joy and comfort to my Friend.  
Oft would he say, "If of our race survive  
Some two or three, to keep the name alive,  
I will not ask if rich or great they be,  
But if they live in love, like you and me."

'Twas not my purpose yet awhile to speak  
As I have spoken ; but why further seek ?  
All that I heard I in my heart approve ;  
You are indeed a Family of Love :  
And my old friend were happy in the sight  
Of those, of whom I shall such tidings write.'

The Captain wrote not : he perhaps was  
slow,

Perhaps he wish'd a little more to know.  
He wrote not yet, and while he thus delay'd,  
Frances alone an early visit paid.

The maiden Lady braved the morning cold,  
To tell her Friend what duty bade be told,

Yet not abruptly—she has first to say,  
 'How cold the morning, but how fine the  
 day ;—

I fear you slept but ill, we kept you long,  
 You made us all so happy, but 'twas wrong—  
 So enterlain'd, no wonder we forgot  
 How the time pass'd ; I fear me you did  
 not.'

In this fair way the Lady seldom fail'd  
 To steer her course, still sounding as she sail'd.

'Dear Captain Elliot, how your Friends you  
 read !

We are a loving Family indeed ;  
 Left in the world each other's aid to be,  
 And join to raise a fallen family.  
 Oh ! little thought we there was one so  
 near,

And one so distant, to us all so dear :  
 All, all alike ; he cannot know, dear man !  
 Who needs him most, as one among us can—  
 One who can all our wants distinctly view,  
 And tell him fairly what were just to do :  
 But you, dear Captain Elliot, as his friend,  
 As ours, no doubt, will your assistance lend.  
 Not for the world would I my Brothers blame ;  
 Good men they are : 'twas not for that I came.  
 No ! did they guess what shifts I make, the  
 grief

That I sustain, they'd fly to my relief ;  
 But I am proud as poor ; I cannot plead  
 My cause with them, nor show how much  
 I need ;

But to my Uncle's Friend it is no shame,  
 Nor have I fear, to seem the thing I am ;  
 My humble pittance life's mere need supplies,  
 But all indulgence, all beyond denies.  
 I aid no pauper, I myself am poor,  
 I cannot help the beggar at my door.  
 I from my scanty table send no meat ;  
 Cook'd and recock'd is every joint I eat.  
 At Church a sermon begs our help,—I stop  
 And drop a tear ; nought else have I to drop ;  
 But pass the out-stretch'd plate with sorrow  
 by,

And my sad heart this kind relief deny.  
 My dress—I strive with all my maiden skill  
 To make it pass, but 'tis disgraceful still ;  
 Yet from all others I my wants conceal,  
 Oh ! Captain Elliot, there are few that feel !  
 But did that rich and worthy Uncle know  
 What you, dear Sir, will in your kindness show,  
 He would his friendly aid with generous hand  
 bestow.

'Good men my Brothers both, and both  
 are raised

Far above want—the Power that gave be  
 praised !

My Sister's jointure, if not ample, gives  
 All she can need, who as a lady lives ;  
 But I, unaided, may through all my years  
 Endure these ills—forgive these foolish tears.

'Once, my dear Sir—I then was young and  
 gay,

And men would talk—but I have had my day :  
 Now all I wish is so to live, that men  
 May not despise me whom they flatter'd then.  
 If you, kind Sir—'

Thus far the Captain heard,  
 Nor save by sign or look had interfered ;  
 But now he spoke ; to all she said agreed,  
 And she conceived it useless to proceed.  
 Something he promised, and the Lady went  
 Half-passed away, yet wondering what he  
 meant ;

Polite he was and kind, but she could trace  
 A smile, or something like it, in his face ;  
 'Twas not a look that gave her joy or pain—  
 She tried to read it, but she tried in vain.

Then call'd the Doctor—'twas his usual  
 way—

To ask 'How fares my worthy friend to-day ?'  
 To feel his pulse, and as a friend to give  
 Unfee'd advice, how such a man should live ;  
 And thus, digressing, he could soon contrive,  
 At his own purpose smoothly to arrive.

'My Brother ! yes, he lives without a care,  
 And, though he needs not, yet he loves to  
 spare :

James I respect ; and yet it must be told,  
 His speech is friendly, but his heart is cold.  
 His smile assumed has not the real glow  
 Of love !—a sunbeam shining on the snow.  
 Children he has ; but are they causes why  
 He should our pleas resist, our claims deny ?  
 Our father left the means by which he thrives,  
 While we are labouring to support our lives.  
 We, need I say ? my widow'd Sister lives  
 On a large jointure ; nay, she largely gives ;—  
 And Fanny sighs—for gold does Fanny sigh ?  
 Or wants she that which money cannot buy—  
 Youth and young hopes ?—Ah ! could my  
 kindred share

The liberal mind's distress, and daily care,  
 The painful toil to gain the petty fee,  
 They'd bless their stars, and join to pity  
 me.

Hard is his fate, who would, with eager joy,  
To save mankind, his every power employ;  
Yet in his walk unnumber'd insults meets,  
And gains 'mid scorn the food that chokes  
him as he eats.

'Oh! Captain Elliot, you who know man-kind,

With all the anguish of the feeling mind,  
Bear to our kind relation these the woes  
That e'en to you 'tis misery to disclose.  
You can describe what I but faintly trace—  
A man of learning cannot bear disgrace;  
Refinement sharpens woes that wants create,  
And 'tis fresh grief such grievous things to  
state;

Yet those so near me let me not reprove—  
I love them well, and they deserve my love;  
But want they know not—Oh! that I could  
say

I am in this as ignorant as they.'

The Doctor thus.—The Captain grave and  
kind,

To the sad tale with serious looks inclined,  
And promise made to keep th' important  
speech in mind.

James and the Widow, how is yet unknown,  
Heard of these visits, and would make their  
own.

All was not fair, they judged, and both agreed  
To their good Friend together to proceed.  
Forth then they went to see him, and per-  
suade—

As warm a pair as ever Anger made.  
The Widow lady must the speaker be:  
So James agreed; for words at will had she;  
And then her Brother, if she needed proof,  
Should add, 'Tis truth:—it was for him  
enough.

'Oh! sir, it grieves me'—for we need not  
dwell

On introduction: all was kind and well.—

'Oh! sir, it grieves, it shocks us both to hear  
What has, with selfish purpose, gain'd your  
ear—

Our very flesh and blood, and, as you know,  
how dear.

Doubtless they came your noble mind  
t' impress

With strange descriptions of their own  
distress;

But I would to the Doctor's face declare,  
That he has more to spend and more to spare,  
With all his craft, than we with all our care.

'And for our Sister, all she has she spends  
Upon herself; herself alone befriends.

She has the portion that our father left,  
While me of mine a careless wretch bereft,  
Save a small part; yet I could joyful live,  
Had I my mite—the widow's mite—to give.  
For this she cares not; Frances does not know  
Their heartfelt joy, who largely can bestow.  
You, Captain Elliot, feel the pure delight,  
That our kind acts in tender hearts excite,  
When to the poor we can our alms extend,  
And make the Father of all Good our friend;  
And, I repeat, I could with pleasure live,  
Had I my mite—the widow's mite—to give.

'We speak not thus, dear Sir, with vile  
intent,

Our nearest friends to wrong or circumvent;  
But that our Uncle, worthy man! should know  
How best his wealth, Heaven's blessing, to  
bestow;

What widows need, and chiefly those who feel  
For all the sufferings which they cannot heal;  
And men in trade, with numbers in their pay,  
Who must be ready for the reckoning-day,  
Or gain or lose!'

—'Thank Heaven,' said James, 'as yet  
I've not been troubled by a dun or debt.'

—The Widow sigh'd, convinced that men so  
weak

Will ever hurt the cause for which they speak;  
However tempted to deceive, still they  
Are ever blundering to the broad high-way  
Of very truth:—But Martha pass'd it by  
With a slight frown, and half-distinguish'd  
sigh—

'Say to our Uncle, sir, how much I long  
To see him sit his kindred race among:  
To hear his brave exploits, to nurse his age,  
And cheer him in his evening's pilgrimage;  
How were I blest to guide him in the way  
Where the religious poor in secret pray,  
To be the humble means by which his heart  
And liberal hand might peace and joy impart!  
But now, farewell!'

—and slowly, softly fell  
The tender accents as she said 'farewell!'

The Merchant stretch'd his hand, his leave  
to take,

And gave the Captain's a familiar shake,  
Yet seem'd to doubt if this was not too free,  
But, gaining courage, said, 'Remember me.'

Some days elaps'd, the Captain did not  
write,

But still was pleased the party to invite;

And, as he walk'd, his custom every day,  
A tall pale stripling met him on his way,  
Who made some efforts, but they proved  
too weak,

And only show'd he was inclined to speak.  
'What, would'st thou, lad?' the Captain  
ask'd, and gave

The youth a power his purposed boon to  
crave,

Yet not in terms direct—'My name,' quoth  
he,

'Is Thomas Bethel; you have heard of me.'—  
'Not good nor evil, Thomas—had I need

Of so much knowledge:—but pray now  
proceed.'—

'Dyson my mother's name; but I have not  
That interest with you, and the worse my lot.  
I serve my Uncle James, and run and write,  
And watch and work from morning until  
night;

Confined among the looms, and webs, and  
wheels,

You cannot think how like a slave one feels.  
'Tis said you have a ship at your command,—  
An' please you, sir, I'm weary of the land,  
And I have read of foreign parts such things,  
As make me sick of Uncle's wheels and  
springs.'

'But, Thomas, why to sea? you look too  
slim

For that rough work—and, Thomas, can you  
swim?'

That he could not, but still he scorn'd a lie,  
And boldly answer'd, 'No, but I can try.'—

'Well, my good lad, but tell me, can you  
read?'

Now, with some pride he answer'd, 'Yes,  
indeed!

I construe Virgil, and our usher said,  
I might have been in Homer had I staid,  
And he was sorry when I came away,  
And so was I, but Uncle would not pay;  
He told the master I had read enough,  
And Greek was all unprofitable stuff;  
So all my learning now is thrown away,  
And I've no time for study or for play;  
I'm ordered here and there, above, below,  
And call'd a dunce for what I cannot know;  
Oh, that I were but from this bondage free!  
Do, please your honour, let me go to sea.'

'But why to sea? they want no Latin  
there;

Hard is their work, and very hard their fare.'

'But then,' said Thomas, 'if on land, I  
doubt

My Uncle Dyson soon would find me out;  
And though he tells me what I yearly cost,  
'Tis my belief he'd miss me were I lost.

For he has said, that I can act as well  
As he himself—but this you must not tell.'

'Tell, Thomas! no, I scorn the base  
design,

Give me your hand, I pledge my word with  
mine;

And if I cannot do thee good, my friend,  
Thou may'st at least upon that word depend.

And hark ye, lad, thy worthy name retain  
To the last hour, or I shall help in vain;

And then the more severe and hard thy part,  
Thine the more praise, and thine the happier  
art.

We meet again—farewell!'—and Thomas  
went

Forth to his tasks, half angry, half content.  
'I never ask'd for help,' thought he, 'but

—twice,  
And all they then would give me was advice;

My Uncle Doctor, when I begg'd his aid,  
Bade me work on, and never be afraid,

But still be good; and I've been good so long,  
I'm half persuaded that they tell me wrong.

Now this Captain still repeats the same,  
But who can live upon a virtuous name,

Starving and praised?—"have patience—  
patience still!"

He said and smiled, and, if I can, I will.'  
So Thomas rested with a mind intent

On what the Captain by his kindness meant.  
Again the invited party all attend,

These dear relations, on this generous Friend.  
They ate, they drank, each striving to appear

Fond, frank, forgiving—above all, sincere.  
Such kindred souls could not admit disguise,

Or envious fears, or painful jealousies;  
So each declared, and all in turn replied,

'Tis just indeed, and cannot be denied.'  
Now various subjects rose,—the country's

cause,  
The war, the allies, the lottery, and the laws,

The widow'd Sister then advantage took  
Of a short pause, and, smiling softly, spoke:

She judg'd what subject would his mind  
excite—

'Tell us, dear Captain, of that bloody fight,  
When our brave Uncle, bleeding at his gun,

Gave a loud shout to see the Frenchmen run.'

'Another day,'—replied the modest host;  
One cannot always of one's battles boast.  
Look not surprise—behold the man in me!  
Another Uncle shall you never see.

No other Dyson to this place shall come,  
Here end my travels, here I place my home;  
Here to repose my shatter'd frame I mean,  
Until the last long journey close the scene.'

The Ladies softly brush'd the tear away;  
James look'd surprise, but knew not what to say;

But Doctor Dyson lifted up his voice,  
And said, 'Dear Uncle, how we all rejoice!'

'No question, Friends! and I your joy approve,

We are, you know, a Family of Love.'

So said the wary Uncle, but the while  
Wore on his face a questionable smile,  
That vanish'd, as he spake in grave and solemn style—

'Friends and relations! let us henceforth seem

Just as we are, nor of our virtues dream,  
That with our waking vanish.—What we are  
Full well we know—t' improve it be our care.  
Forgive the trial I have made: 'tis one  
That has no more than I expected done.  
If as frail mortals you, my Friends, appear,  
I look'd for no angelic beings here,  
For none that riches spurn'd as idle pelf,  
Or served another as he served himself.  
Deceived no longer, let us all forgive;  
I'm old, but yet a tedious time may live.  
This dark complexion India's suns bestow,  
These shrivell'd looks to years of care I owe;

But no disease ensures my early doom,—  
And I may live—forgive me—years to come.  
But while I live, there may some good be done,  
Perchance to many, but at least to One.'

Here he arose, retired, return'd, and brought

The Orphan boy, whom he had train'd and taught

For this his purpose; and the happy boy,  
Though bade to hide, could ill suppress, his joy.—

'This young relation, with your leave, I take,

That he his progress in the world may make—  
Not in my house a slave or spy to be,  
And first to flatter, then to govern me;—  
He shall not nurse me when my senses sleep,  
Nor shall the key of all my secrets keep,  
And be so useful, that a dread to part  
Shall make him master of my easy heart;—  
But to be placed where merit may be proved,  
And all that now impedes his way removed.

'And now no more on these affairs I dwell,  
What I possess that I alone can tell,  
And to that subject we will bid farewell.

As go I must, when Heaven is pleased to call,  
What I shall leave will seem or large or small,  
As you shall view it. When this pulse is still,

You may behold my wealth, and read my will.

'And now, as Captain Elliot much has known,

That to your Uncle never had been shown,  
From him one word of honest counsel hear—  
*And think it always gain to be sincere.'*

### TALE III. THE EQUAL MARRIAGE

THERE are gay nymphs whom serious  
matrons blame,

And men adventurous treat as lawful game,—  
Misses, who strive, with deep and practised  
arts,

To gain and torture inexperienced hearts;  
The hearts entangled they in pride retain,  
And at their pleasure make them feel their  
chain:

For this they learn to manage air and  
face,

To look a virtue, and to act a grace,  
To be whatever men with warmth pursue—

Chaste, gay, retiring, tender, timid, true,  
To-day approaching near, to-morrow just in  
view.

*Maria Glossip* was a thing like this—  
A much observing, much experienced Miss;  
Who on a stranger-youth would first decide  
Th' important question—'Shall I be his  
bride?'

But if unworthy of a lot so bless'd,  
'Twas something yet to rob the man of rest;  
The heart, when stricken, she with hope could  
feed,

Could court pursuit, and, when pursued, recede.

Hearts she had won, and with delusion fed,  
With doubt bewilder'd, and with hope misled;  
Mothers and rivals she had made afraid,  
And wrung the breast of many a jealous  
maid ;

Friendship, the snare of lovers, she profess'd,  
And turn'd the heart's best feelings to a jest.

Yet seem'd the Nymph as gentle as a dove,  
Like one all guiltless of the game of love,—  
Whose guileless innocence might well be gay ;  
Who had no selfish secrets to betray ;  
Sure, if she play'd, she knew not how to play.  
Oh ! she had looks so placid and demure,  
Not Eve, ere fallen, seem'd more meek or  
pure ;

And yet the Tempter of the falling Eve  
Could not with deeper subtily deceive.

A Sailor's heart the Lady's kindness moved,  
And winning looks, to say how well he loved ;  
Then left her hopeful for the stormy main,  
Assured of love when he return'd again.  
Alas ! the gay Lieutenant reach'd the shore,  
To be rejected, and was gay no more ;  
Wine and strong drink the bosom's pain suppress'd,

Till Death procured, what Love denied him—  
rest.

But men of more experience learn to treat  
These fair enslavers with their own deceit.

*Finch* was a younger brother's youngest  
son,

Who pleased an Uncle with his song and gun ;  
Who call'd him ' Bob,' and ' Captain '—by  
that name

Anticipating future rank and fame :  
Not but there was for this some fair pretence—  
He was a cornet in the Home Defence.  
The Youth was ever drest in dapper style,  
Wore spotless linen, and a ceaseless smile ;  
His step was measured, and his air was nice—  
They bought him high, who had him at the  
price

That his own judgment and becoming pride,  
And all the merit he assumed, implied.

A life he loved of liberty and ease,  
And all his pleasant labour was to please ;  
Not call'd at present hostile men to slay,  
He made the hearts of gentle dames his prey.

Hence tales arose, and one of sad report—  
A fond, fair girl became his folly's sport,—  
A cottage lass, who ' knew the youth would  
prove

For ever true, and give her love for love ;

Sure when he could, and that would soon be  
known,

He would be proud to show her as his own.'

But still she felt the village damsels' sneer,  
And her sad soul was fill'd with secret fear ;  
His love excepted, earth was all a void,  
And he, the excepted man, her peace destroy'd.  
When the poor Jane was buried, we could hear  
The threat of rustics whisper'd round her bier.

Stories like this were told, but yet, in time  
Fair ladies lost their horror at the crime ;  
They knew that cottage girls were forward  
things,

Who never heed a nettle till it stings ;  
Then, too, the Captain had his fault confess'd,  
And scorn'd to turn a murder to a jest.

Away with murder !—This accomplish'd  
swain

Beheld Maria, and confess'd her reign—  
She came, invited by the rector's wife,  
Who ' never saw such sweetness in her life.'  
Now, as the rector was the Uncle's friend,  
It pleased the Nephew there his steps to bend,  
Where the fair damsel then her visit paid,  
And seem'd an unassuming rustic maid :  
A face so fair, a look so meek, he found  
Had pierced that heart, no other nymph  
could wound.

' Oh, sweet Maria'—so began the Youth  
His meditations—' thine the simple truth !  
Thou hast no wicked wisdom of thy sex,  
No wish to gain a subject-heart—then vex.  
That heavenly bosom no proud passion swells,  
No serpent's wisdom with thy meekness  
dwells ;

Oh ! could I bind thee to my heart, and live  
In love with thee, on what our fortunes give !  
Far from the busy world, in some dear spot,  
Where Love reigns king, we'd find some  
peaceful cot.

To wed, indeed, no prudent man would  
choose ;

But, such a maid will lighter bonds refuse !'

And was this youth a rake ?—In very  
truth ;

Yet, feeling love, he felt it as a youth ;  
If he had vices, they were laid aside ;  
He quite forgot the simple girl who died ;  
With dear Maria he in peace would live,  
And what had pass'd—Maria would forgive.

The fair Coquette at first was pleased to  
find

A swain so knowing had become so blind ;

And she determined, with her utmost skill,  
To bind the rebel to her sovereign will.  
She heard the story of the old deceit,  
And now resolved he should with justice  
meet ;—

‘ Soon as she saw him on her hook secure,  
He should the pangs of perjured man endure.’

These her first thoughts—but as, from time  
to time,

The Lover came, she dwelt not on his crime—  
‘ Crime could she call it? prudes, indeed,  
condemn

These slips of youth—but she was not of  
them.’

So gentler thoughts arose as, day by day,  
The Captain came his passion to display.  
When he display’d his passion, and she felt,  
Not without fear, her heart began to melt—  
Joy came with terror at a state so new ;  
Glad of his truth ; if he indeed were true !

This she decided as the heart decides,  
Resolved to be the happiest of brides.  
‘ Not great my fortune—hence,’ said she,  
‘ ’tis plain,

Me, and not mine, dear Youth ! he hopes to  
gain ;

Nor has he much ; but, as he sweetly talks,  
We from our cot shall have delightful walks,  
Love, lord within it ! I shall smile to see  
My little cherubs on the father’s knee.’  
Then sigh’d the nymph, and in her fancied lot,  
She all the mischiefs of the past forgot.

Such were their tender meditations ; thus  
Would they the visions of the day discuss :  
Each, too, the old sad habits would no more  
Indulge ; both dare be virtuous and be poor.

They both had past the year when law  
allows

Free-will to lover who would fain be spouse :  
Yet the good youth his Uncle’s sanction  
sought—

‘ Marry her, Bob ! and are you really caught?  
Then you’ve exchanged, I warrant, heart for  
heart—

‘Tis well ! I meant to warn her of your art :  
This Parson’s Babe has made you quite a  
fool—

But are you sure your ardour will not cool ?  
Have you not habits, Boy ? but take your  
chance !

How will you live ? I cannot much advance.  
But hear you not what through the village flies,  
That this your dove is famed for her disguise ?

Yet, say they not, she leads a gayish life ?  
Art sure she’ll show the virtues of a wife ?’—

‘ Oh, Sir, she’s all that mortal man can  
love !’—

‘ Then marry, Bob ! and that the fact will  
prove—

Yet in a kind of lightness, folk agree.’—

‘ Lightness in her ! indeed, it cannot be—  
’Tis Innocence alone that makes her manners  
free.’

‘ Well, my good friend ! then Innocence  
alone

Is to a something like Flirtation prone ;  
And I advise—but let me not offend—  
That Prudence should on Innocence attend,  
Lest some her sportive purity mistake,  
And term your angel more than half a rake.’

The Nymph, now sure, could not entirely  
curb

The native wish her lover to disturb.  
Oft he observed her, and could ill endure  
The gentle coquetry of maid so pure :  
Men he beheld press round her, and the Fair  
Caught every sigh, and smiled at every  
prayer ;

And grieved he was with jealous pains to see  
The effects of all her wit and pleasantry.

‘ Yet why alarm’d ?’—he said ; ‘ with so  
much sense,

She has no freedom, dashing, or pretence :  
’Tis her gay mind, and I should feel a pride  
In her chaste levities’—he said, and sigh’d.  
Yet, when apart from company, he chose  
To talk a little of his bosom’s woes—  
But one sweet smile, and one soft speech,  
suppress’d

All pain, and set his feeling heart at rest.  
Nay, in return, she felt, or feign’d, a fear,  
‘ He was too lively to be quite sincere—  
She knew a certain lady, and could name  
A certain time’—So, even was the blame,  
And thus the loving pair more deep in love  
became.

They married soon—for why delay the  
thing

That such amazing happiness would bring ?—  
Now of that blissful state, O Muse of Hymen !  
sing.

Love dies all kinds of death : in some so  
quick

It comes—he is not previously sick ;  
But ere the sun has on the couple shed  
The morning rays, the smile of Love is fled.



And what the cause ? for Love should not  
expire,

And none the reason of such fate require.  
Both had a mask, that with such pains they  
wore,

Each took it off when it avail'd no more.  
They had no feeling of each other's pain ;  
To wear it longer had been crime in vain.

As in some pleasant eve we view the scene,  
Though cool yet calm, if joyless yet serene,—  
Who has not felt a quiet still delight

In the clear, silent, love-befriending night ?  
The moon so sweetly bright, so softly fair,  
That all but happy lovers would be there,—  
Thinking there must be in her still domain  
Something that soothes the sting of mortal  
pain ;

While earth itself is dress'd in light so clear,  
That they might rest contented to be here !

Such is the night ; but when the morn  
awakes,

The storm arises, and the forest shakes ;  
This mighty change the grieving travellers  
find,

The freezing snows fast drifting in the wind ;  
Firs deeply laden shake the snowy top,  
Streams slowly freezing, fretting till they  
stop ;

And void of stars the angry clouds look down  
On the cold earth, exchanging frown with  
frown.

Such seem'd, at first, the cottage of our  
pair—

Fix'd in their fondness, in their prospects fair ;  
Youth, health, affection, all that life supplies,  
Bright as the stars that gild the cloudless  
skies,

Were theirs—or seem'd to be, but soon the  
scene

Was black as if its light had never been.

Weary full soon, and restless then they grew,  
Then off the painful mask of prudence threw,  
For Time has told them all ; and taught  
them what to rue.

They long again to tread the former round  
Of dissipation—' Why should he be bound,  
While his sweet inmate of the cottage sighs  
For adulation, rout, and rhapsodies ?

Not Love himself, did love exist, could lead  
A heart like hers, that flutter'd to be freed.'

But Love, or what seem'd like him, quickly  
died,

Nor Prudence, nor Esteem, his place supplied.

Disguise thrown off, each reads the other's  
heart,

And feels with horror that they cannot part.  
Still they can speak—and 'tis some comfort  
still,

That each can vex the other when they will :  
Words half in jest to words in earnest led,  
And these the earnest angry passions fed,  
Till all was fierce reproach, and peace for  
ever fled.

' And so you own it ! own it to my face,  
Your love is vanish'd—infamous and base ! '

' Madam, I loved you truly, while I deem'd  
You were the truthful being that you seem'd ;  
But when I see your native temper rise  
Above control, and break through all dis-  
guise,

Casting it off, as serpents do their skin,  
And showing all the folds of vice within,—  
What see I then to love ? was I in love with  
Sin ? '

' So may I think, and you may feel it too ;  
A loving couple, Sir, were Sin and you !

Whence all this anger ? is it that you find  
You cannot always make a woman blind ?  
You talk of falsehood and disguise—talk on !  
But all my trust and confidence are gone ;  
Remember you, with what a serious air  
You talk'd of love, as if you were at prayer ?  
You spoke of home-born comforts, quiet,  
ease,

And the pure pleasure, that must always  
please,

With an assumed and sentimental air,  
Smiting your breast, and acting like a player.  
Then your life's comfort ! and your holy joys !  
Holy, forsooth ! and your sweet girls and  
boys,

How you would train them !—All this farce  
review,

And then, Sir, talk of being just and true ! '

' Madam ! your sex expects that ours  
should lie :

The simple creatures know it, and comply.

You hate the truth ; there's nothing you  
despise

Like a plain man, who spurns your vanities.  
Are you not early taught your prey to catch ?  
When your mamma pronounce—" A proper  
match ! "

What said your own ?—" Do, daughter !  
curb your tongue,

And you may win him, for the man is young ;

But if he views you as ourselves, good-by  
To speculation!—He will never try.”

‘Then is the mask assumed, and then you  
bait

Your hook with kindness! and as anglers  
wait,

Now here, now there, with keen and eager  
glance,

Marking your victims as the shoals advance;  
When, if the gaping wretch should make a  
snap,

You jerk him up, and have him in your trap,  
Who gasping, panting, in your presence lies,  
And you exulting view the imprison’d prize.

‘Such are your arts! while he did but  
intend,

In harmless play an idle hour to spend,  
Lightly to talk of love! your fix’d intent  
Is on to lure him, where he never meant  
To go, but going, must his speed repent.

If he of Cupid speaks, you watch your  
man,

And make a change for Hymen, if you can;  
Thus he, ingenuous, easy, fond, and weak,  
Speaks the rash words he has been led to  
speak;

Puts the dire question that he meant to shun,  
And by a moment’s frenzy is undone.”—

‘Well!’ said the Wife, ‘admit this non-  
sense true,—

A mighty prize she gains in catching you;  
For my part, Sir, I most sincerely wish  
My landing-net had miss’d my precious  
fish!’—

‘Would that it had! or I had wisely lent  
An ear to those who said I should repent.’—

‘Hold, Sir! at least my reputation spare,  
And add another falsehood if you dare.’—

‘Your reputation, Madam!—rest secure,  
That will all scandal and reproach endure,  
And be the same in worth: it is like him  
Who floats, but finds he cannot sink or swim;  
Half raised above the storm, half sunk below,  
It just exists, and that is all we know.

Such the good name that you so much regard,  
And yet to keep afloat find somewhat hard.  
Nay, no reply! in future I decline  
Dispute, and take my way.’—

‘And I, Sir, mine.’  
Oh! happy, happy, happy pair! both  
sought,

Both seeking—catching both, and caught!

## TALE IV. RACHEL

It chanced we walk’d upon the heath, and  
met

A wandering woman; her thin clothing wet  
With morning fog; the little care she took  
Of things like these was written in her look.  
Not pain from pinching cold was in her face,  
But hurrying grief, that knows no resting  
place,—

Appearing ever as on business sent,  
The wandering victim of a fix’d intent;  
Yet in her fancied consequence and speed,  
Impell’d to beg assistance for her need.

When she beheld my friend and me, with  
eye

And pleading hand, she sought our charity;  
More to engage our friendly thoughts the  
while,

She threw upon her miseries a smile,  
That, like a varnish on a picture laid,  
More prominent and bold the figures made;  
Yet was there sign of joy that we complied,  
The moment’s wish indulged and gratified.

‘Where art thou wandering, Rachel?  
whither stray,

From thy poor heath in such unwholesome  
day?’

Ask’d my kind friend, who had familiar grown  
With Rachel’s grief, and oft compassion  
shown;

Oft to her hovel had in winter sent  
The means of comfort—oft with comforts  
went.

Him well she knew, and with requests pur-  
sued,

Though too much lost and spent for gratitude.  
‘Where art thou wandering, Rachel? let  
me hear?’—

‘The fleet! the fleet!’ she answer’d, ‘will  
appear

Within the bay, and I shall surely know  
The news to-night!—turn tide, and breezes  
blow!

For if I lose my time, I must remain  
Till the next year before they come again!’

'What can they tell thee, Rachel?'—

'Should I say,

I must repent me to my dying day.

Then I should lose the pension that they give;

For who would trust their secrets to a sieve?

I must be gone!'—And with her wild, but  
keen

And crafty look, that would appear to mean,

She hurried on; but turn'd again to say,

'All will be known: they anchor in the bay;

Adieu! be secret!—sailors have no home:

Blow wind, turn tide!—Be sure the fleet will  
come.'

Grown wilder still, the frantic creature  
strode

With hurried feet upon the flinty road.

On her departing form I gazed with pain—

'And should you not,' I cried, 'her ways  
restrain?

What hopes the wild deluded wretch to meet?

And means she ought by this expected fleet?

Knows she her purpose? has she hope to see

Some friend to aid her in her poverty?

Why leave her thus bewildered to pursue

The fancy's good, that never comes in  
view?'—

'Nay! she is harmless, and if more con-  
fined,

Would more distress in the coercion find.

Save at the times when to the coast she flies,

She rests, nor shows her mind's obliquities,

But ever talks she of the sea, and shows

Her sympathy with every wind that blows.

We think it, therefore, useless to restrain

A creature of whose conduct none complain,

Whose age and looks protect her,—should  
they fail,

Her craft and wild demeanour will prevail.

A soldier once attack'd her on her way—

She spared him not, but bade him kneel and  
pray—

Praying herself aloud—th' astonish'd man

Was so confounded, that away he ran.

'Her sailor left her, with, perhaps, intent

To make her his—'tis doubtful what he  
meant:

But he was captured, and the life he led

Drove all such young engagements from his  
head.

On him she ever thought, and none beside,

Seeking her love, were favour'd or denied;

On her dear David she had fix'd her view,

And fancy judg'd him ever fond and true.

Nay, young and handsome—Time could not  
destroy—

No—he was still the same—her gallant boy!

Labour had made her coarse, and her attire

Show'd that she wanted no one to admire;

None to commend her; but she could conceive

The same of him, as when he took his leave,

And gaily told what riches he would bring,

And grace her hand with the symbolic ring.

'With want and labour was her mind  
subdued;

She lived in sorrow and in solitude.

Religious neighbours, kindly calling, found

Her thoughts unsettled, anxious, and unsound;

Low, superstitious, querulous, and weak,

She sought for rest, but knew not how to seek;

And their instructions, though in kindness  
meant,

Were far from yielding the desired content.

They hoped to give her notions of their own,

And talk'd of "feelings" she had never  
known;

They ask'd of her "experience," and they  
bred,

In her weak mind, a melancholy dread

Of something wanting in her faith, of some—

She knew not what—"acceptance," that  
should come;

And as it came not, she was much afraid

That she in vain had served her God and  
pray'd.

'She thought her Lover dead. In prayer  
she named

The erring Youth, and hoped he was re-  
claim'd.

This she confess'd; and trembling, heard  
them say,

"Her prayers were sinful—So the papists  
pray.

Her David's fate had been decided long,

And prayers and wishes for his state were  
wrong."

'Had these her guides united love and skill,

They might have ruled and rectified her will;

But they perceived not the bewildered mind,

And show'd her paths, that she could never  
find:

The weakness that was Nature's, they re-  
proved,

And all its comforts from the Heart removed.

'Ev'n in this state, she loved the winds  
that sweep

O'er the wild heath, and curl the restless deep

A turf-built hut beneath a hill she chose,  
And oft at night in winter storms arose,  
Hearing, or dreaming, the distracted cry  
Of drowning seamen on the breakers by :  
For there were rocks, that when the tides  
were low

Appear'd, and vanish'd when the waters flow ;  
And there she stood, all patient to behold  
Some seaman's body on the billows roll'd.

' One calm, cold evening, when the moon  
was high,

And rode sublime within the cloudless sky,  
She sat within her hut, nor seem'd to feel  
Or cold or want, but turn'd her idle wheel,  
And with sad song its melancholy tone  
Mix'd, all unconscious that she dwelt alone.

' But none will harm her—Or who, willing,  
can ?

She is too wretched to have fear of man—  
Not man ! but something—if it should  
appear,

That once was man—that something did she  
fear.

' No causeless terror !—In that moon's  
clear light

It came, and seem'd a parley to invite ;  
It was no hollow voice—no brushing by  
Of a strange being, who escapes the eye—

No cold or thrilling touch, that will but last  
While we can think, and then for ever past.  
But this sad face—though not the same, she  
knew

Enough the same, to prove the vision true—  
Look'd full upon her !—starting in affright ;  
She fled, her wildness doubling at the sight ;  
With shrieks of terror, and emotion strong,  
She pass'd it by, and madly rush'd along  
To the bare rocks—While David, who, that  
day,

Had left his ship at anchor in the bay,  
Had seen his friends who yet survived, and  
heard

Of her who loved him—and who thus ap-  
pear'd—

He tried to soothe her, but retired afraid  
T' approach, and left her to return for aid.

' None came ! and Rachel in the morn was  
found

Turning her wheel, without its spindles, round,  
With household look of care, low singing to  
the sound.

' Since that event, she is what you have seen,  
But time and habit make her more serene,  
The edge of anguish blunted—yet, it seems,  
Sea, ships, and sailors' miseries are her  
dreams.'

## TALE V. VILLARS

*Poet.* Know you the fate of Villars ?—

*Friend.* What ! the lad  
At school so fond of solitude, and sad ;  
Who broke our bounds because he scorn'd a  
guide,

And would walk lonely by the river's side ?

*P.* The same !—who rose at midnight to  
behold

The moonbeams shedding their ethereal gold ;  
Who held our sports and pleasures in disgrace,  
For Guy of Warwick, and old Chevy Chase.—

*F.* Who sought for friendships, gave his  
generous heart

To every boy who chose to act the part ;  
Or judged he felt it—not aware that boys  
Have poor conceit of intellectual joys :  
Theirs is no season for superfluous friends,  
And none they need, but those whom Nature  
lends.

*P.* But he, too, loved ?—

*F.* Oh ! yes : his friend betray'd

The tender passion for the angel-maid.  
Some child whose features he at church had  
seen,

Became his bosom's and his fancy's queen ;  
Some favourite look was on his mind im-  
press'd—

His warm and fruitful fondness gave the rest.

*P.* He left his father ?—

*F.* Yes ! and rambled round  
The land on foot—I know not what he found.

Early he came to his paternal land,  
And took the course he had in rambling plann'd.  
Ten years we lost him : he was then employ'd  
In the wild schemes that he, perhaps, enjoy'd.  
His mode of life, when he to manhood grew,  
Was all his own—its shape disclosed to few.

Our grave, stern dames, who know the  
deeds of all,

Say that some damsels owe to him their fall ;

And, though a Christian in his creed profess'd,  
He had some heathen notions in his breast.  
Yet we may doubt; for women, in his eyes,  
Were high and glorious, queens and deities;  
But he, perhaps, adorer and yet man,  
Transgress'd yet worshipp'd. There are  
those who can.

Near him a Widow's mansion he survey'd—  
The lovely mother of a lovelier Maid;  
Not great their wealth; though they were  
proud to claim

Alliance with a house of noblest name.

Now, had I skill, I would right fain devise  
To bring the highborn spinster to your eyes.  
I could discourse of lip, and chin, and cheek,  
But you would see no picture as I speak.  
Such colours cannot—mix them as I may—  
Paint you this nymph—We'll try a different  
way.

First take Calista in her glowing charms,  
E'er yet she sank within Lothario's arms,  
Endued with beauties ripe, and large desires,  
And all that feels delight, and that inspires;  
Add Cleopatra's great, yet tender soul,  
Her boundless pride, her fondness of control,  
Her daring spirit, and her wily art,  
That, though it tortures, yet commands the  
heart;

Add woman's anger for a lover's slight,  
And the revenge, that insult will excite;  
Add looks for veils, that she at will could wear,  
As Juliet fond, as Imogen sincere,—  
Like Portia grave, sententious, and design'd  
For high affairs, or gay as Rosalind—  
Catch, if you can, some notion of the dame,  
And let Matilda serve her for a name.

Think next how Villars saw th' enchanting  
maid,

And how he loved, pursued, adored, obey'd—  
Obey'd in all, except the dire command,  
No more to dream of that bewitching hand.  
His love provoked her scorn, his wealth she  
spurn'd,

And frowns for praise, contempt for prayer  
return'd;

But, proud yet shrewd, the wily sex despise  
The would-be husband—yet the votary prize.  
As Roman conquerors, of their triumph vain,  
Saw humbled monarchs in their pompous  
train,

Who, when no more they swell'd the show of  
pride,

In secret sorrow'd, or in silence died;

So, when our friend adored the Beauty's  
shrine,

She mark'd the act, and gave the nod divine;  
And strove with scatter'd smiles, yet scarcely  
strove,

To keep the lover, while she scorn'd his love.

These, and his hope, the doubtful man  
sustain'd;

For who that loves believes himself dis-  
dain'd?—

Each look, each motion, by his fondness read,  
Became Love's food, and greater fondness  
bred;

The pettiest favour was to him the sign

Of secret love, and said, 'I'll yet be thine!'

One doleful year she held the captive swain,  
Who felt and cursed, and wore and bless'd,  
the chain;

Who pass'd a thousand galling insults by,  
For one kind glance of that ambiguous eye.

P. Well! time, perhaps, might to the  
coldest heart

Some gentle thought of one so fond impart;

And pride itself has often favour shown

To what it governs, and can call its own.

F. Thus were they placed, when to the  
village came

That lordly stranger, whom I need not name;  
Known since too well, but then as rich and  
young,

Untried his prowess, and his crimes unsung.  
Smooth was his speech, and show'd a gentle  
mind,

Deaf to his praise, and to his merits blind;  
But raised by woman's smile, and pleased  
with all mankind.

At humble distance he this fair survey'd,  
Read her high temper, yet adored the Maid;

Far off he gazed, as if afraid to meet,  
Or show the hope her anger would defeat:

Awful his love, and kept a guarded way,  
Afraid to venture, till it finds its may.

And soon it found! nor could the Lady's  
pride

Her triumph bury, or her pleasure hide.

And jealous Love, that ever looks to spy  
The dreaded wandering of a lady's eye,

Perceived with anguish, that the prize long  
sought

A sudden rival from his hopes had caught.  
Still Villars loved; at length, in strong despair,

O'er-tortured passion thus prefer'd its  
prayer:—

'Life of my life! at once my fate decreé—  
I wait my death, or more than life, from thee:  
I have no arts, nor powers, thy soul to move,  
But doting constancy, and boundless love;  
This is my all: had I the world to give,  
Thine were its throne—now bid me die or live!'

'Or die or live'—the gentle Lady cried—  
'As suits thee best; that point thyself decide,  
But if to death thou hast thyself decreed,  
Then like a man perform the manly deed;  
The well-charged pistol to the ear apply,  
Make loud report, and like a hero die:  
Let rogues and rats on ropes and poison  
seize—

Shame not thy friends by petty death like  
these;

Sure we must grieve at what thou think'st  
to do,

But spare us blushes for the manner too!'

Then with inviting smiles she turn'd aside,  
Allay'd his anger, and consoled his pride.

Oft had the fickle fair beheld with scorn  
The unhappy man bewilder'd and forlorn,  
Then with one softening glance of those bright  
eyes

Restored his spirit, and dispersed his sighs.  
Oft had I seen him on the lea below,  
As feelings moved him, walking quick or slow:  
Now a glad thought, and now a doleful came,  
And he adored or cursed the changeable dame,  
Who was to him as cause is to effect—

Poor tool of pride, perverseness, and neglect!  
Upon thy rival were her thoughts bestow'd,  
Ambitious love within her bosom glow'd;  
And oft she wish'd, and strong was her desire,  
The Lord could love her like the faithful  
Squire;

But she was rivall'd in that noble breast—  
He loved her passing well, but not the best,  
For self reign'd there: but still he call'd her  
fair,

And woo'd the Muse his passion to declare.  
His verses all were flaming, all were fine;  
With sweetness, nay with sense, in every  
line—

Not as Lord Byron would have done the  
thing,

But better far than lords are used to sing.  
It pleased the Maid, and she, in very truth,  
Loved, in Calista's love, the noble youth;  
Not like sweet Juliet, with that pure delight,  
Fond and yet chaste, enraptur'd and yet right;

Not like the tender Imogen, confined  
To one, but one! the true, the wedded mind;  
True, one prefer'd our sighing nymph as  
these,

But thought not, like them, one alone could  
please.

Time pass'd, nor yet the youthful peer  
proposed

To end his suit, nor his had Villars closed  
Fond hints the one, the other cruel bore;  
That was more cautious, this was kind the  
more:

Both for soft moments waited—that to take  
Of these advantage; fairly this to make.

These moments came—or so my Lord  
believed—

He dropp'd his mask; and both were un-  
deceived.

She saw the vice that would no longer feign,  
And he an angry beauty's pure disdain.

Villars that night had in my ear confess'd,  
He thought himself her spaniel and her jest.

He saw his rival of his goddess sure,  
'But then,' he cried, 'her virtue is secure;

Should he offend, I haply may obtain  
The high reward of vigilance and pain;

Till then I take, and on my bended knee,  
Scraps from the banquet, gleanings of the  
tree.'

Pitying, I smiled; for I had known the  
time

Of Love insulted—constancy my crime.

Not thus our friend: for him the morning  
shone,

In tenfold glory, as for him alone;  
He wept, expecting still reproof to meet,

And all that was not cruel count as sweet.  
Back he return'd, all eagerness and joy,

Proud as a prince, and restless as a boy.  
He sought to speak, but could not aptly find

Words for his use, they enter'd not his mind;  
So full of bliss, that wonder and delight

Seem'd in those happy moments to unite.  
He was like one who gains, but dreads to lose,

A prize that seems to vanish as he views:  
And in his look was wildness and alarm—

Like a sad conjuror who forgets his charm,  
And, when the demon at the call appears,

Cannot command the spirit for his fears:  
So Villars seem'd by his own bliss perplex'd,

And scarcely knowing what would happen next.  
But soon, a witness to their vows, I saw

The maiden his, if not by love, by law;

The bells proclaim'd it—merry call'd by those  
Who have no foresight of their neighbours'  
woes.

How proudly show'd the man his lovely bride,  
Demurely pacing, pondering, at his side!  
While all the loving maids around declared,  
That faith and constancy deserved reward.  
The baffled Lord retreated from the scene  
Of so much gladness, with a world of spleen;  
And left the wedded couple, to protest,  
That he no fear, that she no love possess'd,  
That all his vows were scorn'd, and all his  
hope a jest.

Then fell the oaks to let in light of day,  
Then rose the mansion that we now survey,  
Then all the world flock'd gaily to the scene  
Of so much splendour, and its splendid queen;  
But whether all within the gentle breast  
Of him, of her, was happy or at rest,—  
Whether no lonely sigh confess'd regret,  
Was then unknown, and is a secret yet;  
And we may think, in common duty bound,  
That no complaint is made where none is  
found.

Then came the Rival to his villa down,  
Lost to the pleasures of the heartless town;  
Famous he grew, and he invited all  
Whom he had known to banquet at the Hall;  
Talk'd of his love, and said, with many a sigh,  
' 'Tis death to lose her, and I wish to die.'

Twice met the parties; but with cool disdain

In her, in him with looks of awe and pain.  
Villars had pity, and conceived it hard  
That true regret should meet with no regard—  
'Smile, my Matilda! virtue should inflict  
No needless pain, nor be so sternly strict.'

The Hall was furnish'd in superior style,  
And money wanted from our sister isle;  
The lady-mother to the husband sued—  
'Alas! that care should on our bliss intrude!  
You must to Ireland; our possessions there  
Require your presence, nay, demand your  
care.

My pensive daughter begs with you to sail;  
But spare your wife, nor let the wish prevail.'

He went, and found upon his Irish land  
Cases and griefs he could not understand.  
Some glimmering light at first his prospect  
cheer'd—

Clear it was not, but would in time be clear'd;  
But when his lawyers had their efforts made,  
No mind in man the darkness could pervade;

'Twas palpably obscure: week after week  
He sought for comfort, but was still to seek.  
At length, impatient to return, he strove  
No more with law, but gave the rein to love;  
And to his Lady and their native shore  
Vow'd to return, and thence to turn no more.

While yet on Irish ground in trouble kept,  
The Husband's terrors in his toils had slept;  
But he no sooner touch'd the British soil,  
Than jealous terrors took the place of toil—  
'Where has she been? and how attended?

Who

Has watch'd her conduct, and will vouch her  
true?

She sigh'd at parting, but methought her  
sighs

Were more profound than would from nature  
rise;

And though she wept as never wife before,  
Yet were her eyelids neither swell'd nor sore.  
Her lady-mother has a good repute,  
As watchful dragon of forbidden fruit;  
Yet dragons sleep, and mothers have been  
known

To guard a daughter's secret as their own;  
Nor can the absent in their travel see  
How a fond wife and mother may agree.

'Suppose the lady is most virtuous!—then,  
What can she know of the deceits of men?  
Of all they plan, she neither thinks nor cares;  
But keeps, good lady! at her books and  
prayers.

'In all her letters there are love, respect,  
Esteem, regret, affection, all correct—  
Too much—she fears that I should see  
neglect;

And there are fond expressions, but unlike  
The rest, as meant to be observed and strike;  
Like quoted words, they have the show of art,  
And come not freely from the gentle heart—  
Adopted words, and brought from memory's  
store,

When the chill faltering heart supplies no  
more:

'Tis so the hypocrite pretends to feel,  
And speaks the words of earnestness and zeal.

'Hers was a sudden, though a sweet consent;

May she not now as suddenly repent?  
My rival's vices drove him from her door;  
But hates she vice as truly as before?  
How do I know, if he should plead again,  
That all her scorn and anger would remain?

'Oh! words of folly—is it thus I deem  
Of the chaste object of my fond esteem?  
Away with doubt! to jealousy adieu!  
I know her fondness, and believe her true.

'Yet why that haste to furnish every need,  
And send me forth with comfort, and with  
speed?

Yes; for she dreaded that the winter's rage  
And our frail hoy should on the seas engage.

'But that vile girl! I saw a treacherous eye  
Glance on her mistress! so demure and sly,  
So forward too—and would Matilda's pride  
Admit of that, if there was nought beside?'

Such, as he told me, were the doubt, the  
dread,

By jealous fears on observations fed.

Home he proceeded: there remain'd to him  
But a few miles—the night was wet and dim;  
Thick, heavy dews descended on the ground,  
And all was sad and melancholy round.

While thinking thus, an inn's far gleaming  
fire

Caused new emotions in the pensive Squire.

'Here I may learn, and seeming careless too,  
If all is well, ere I my way pursue.

How fare you, landlord?—how, my friend,  
are all?—

Have you not seen—my people at the Hall?  
Well, I may judge—

'Oh! yes, your Honour, well,  
As Joseph knows; and he was sent to tell.'—

'How! sent—I miss'd him—Joseph, do you  
say?

Why sent, if well?—I miss'd him on the way.'

There was a poacher on the chimney-seat,

A gipsy, conjuror, smuggler, stroller, cheat.

The Squire had fined him for a captured hare,  
Whipp'd and imprison'd—he had felt the  
fare,

And he remember'd: 'Will your Honour  
know

How does my Lady? that myself can show.

On Monday early—for your Honour sees

The poor man must not slumber at his ease,

Nor must he into woods and coverts lurk,

Nor work alone, but must be seen to work:

'Tis not, your Honour knows, sufficient now

For us to live, but we must prove it—how:

Stay, please your Honour,—I was early up,

And forth without a morsel or a sup.

There was my Lady's carriage—Whew! it  
drove

As if the horses had been spur'd by Love.'

'A poet, John!' said Villars—feebly said,  
Confused with fear, and humbled and dis-  
may'd—

'And where this carriage?—but, my heart!  
enough—

Why do I listen to the villain's stuff?—  
And where wert thou? and what the spur of  
thine,

That led thee forth?—we surely may divine!'

'Hunger, your Honour! I and my poor  
wife

Have now no other in our wane of life.

Were Phoebe handsome, and were I a Squire,  
I might suspect her, and young Lords  
admire.'—

'What! rascal—'—'Nay, your Honour,  
on my word,

I should be jealous of that fine young Lord;  
Yet him my Lady in the carriage took,  
But innocent—I'd swear it on the book.'

'You villain, swear!'—for still he wish'd  
to stay,

And hear what more the fellow had to say.

'Phoebe, said I, a rogue that had a heart  
To do the deed would make his Honour  
smart—

Says Phoebe, wisely, "Think you, would he go,  
If he were jealous, from my Lady?—No."'

This was too much! poor Villars left the  
inn,

To end the grief that did but then begin.

'With my Matilda in the coach!—what lies

Will the vile rascal in his spleen devise?

Yet this is true, that on some vile pretence

Men may entrap the purest innocence.

He saw my fears—alas! I am not free

From every doubt—but, no! it cannot be.'

Villars moved slow, moved quick, as check'd  
by fear,

Or urged by Love, and drew his mansion near.

Light burst upon him, yet he fancied gloom,

Nor came a twinkling from Matilda's room.

'What then? 'tis idle to expect that all

Should be produced at jealous fancy's call;

How! the park-gate wide open! who would  
dare

Do this, if her presiding glance were there?

But yet, by chance—I know not what to  
think,

For thought is hell, and I'm upon the brink!

Not for a thousand worlds, ten thousand lives,

Would I—Oh! what depends upon our  
wives!



Pains, labours, terrors, all would I endure,  
Yes, all but this—and this, could I be  
sure—

Just then a light within the window shone,  
And show'd a lady, weeping and alone.  
His heart beat fondly—on another view,  
It beat more strongly, and in terror too—  
It was his Sister!—and there now appear'd  
A servant creeping like a man that fear'd.  
He spoke with terror—'Sir, did Joseph tell?  
Have you not met him?'—

'Is your Lady well?'  
'Well? Sir—your Honour—'

'Heaven and earth! what mean  
Your stupid questions? I have nothing seen,  
Nor heard, nor know, nor—Do, good Thomas,  
speak!

Your mistress—'

'Sir, has gone from home a week—  
My Lady, Sir, your sister—'

But, too late  
Was this—my Friend had yielded to his fate.  
He heard the truth, became serene and mild,  
Patient and still, as a corrected child;  
At once his spirit with his fortune fell  
To the last ebb, and whisper'd—It is well.

Such was his fall; and grievous the effect!  
From henceforth all things fell into neglect—  
Themind no more alert, the form no more erect.

Villars long since, as he indulged his spleen  
By lonely travel on the coast, had seen  
A large old mansion suffer'd to decay  
In some law-strife, and slowly drop away.  
Dark elms around the constant herons bred,  
Those the marsh dykes, the neighbouring  
ocean, fed;

Rocks near the coast no shipping would allow,  
And stubborn heath around forbade the  
plough;

Dull must the scene have been in years of old,  
But now was wildly dismal to behold—  
One level sadness! marsh, and heath, and sea,  
And, save these high dark elms, nor plant  
nor tree.

In this bleak ruin Villars found a room,  
Square, small, and lofty—seat of grief and  
gloom:

A sloping skylight on the white wall threw,  
When the sun set, a melancholy hue;  
The Hall of Vathek has a room so bare,  
So small, so sad, so form'd to nourish care.  
'Here,' said the Traveller, 'all so dark within,  
And dull without, a man might mourn for sin,

Or punish sinners—here a wanton wife  
And vengeful husband might be cursed for life.'

His mind was now in just that wretched  
state,

That deems Revenge our right, and crime our  
fate.

All other views he banish'd from his soul,  
And let this tyrant vex him and control;  
Life he despised, and had that Lord defied,  
But that he long'd for Vengeance e'er he died.  
The law he spurn'd, the combat he declined,  
And to his purpose all his soul resign'd.

Full fifteen months had pass'd, and we began  
To have some hope of the returning man;  
Now to his steward of his small affairs  
He wrote, and mention'd leases and repairs  
But yet his soul was on its scheme intent,  
And but a moment to his interest lent.

His faithless wife and her triumphant peer  
Despised his vengeance, and disdain'd to fear;  
In splendid lodgings near the town they dwelt,  
Nor fears from wrath, nor threats from con-  
science felt.

Long time our friend had watch'd, and  
much had paid

For vulgar minds, who lent his vengeance aid.  
At length one evening, late returning home,  
Thoughtless and fearless of the ills to come,  
The Wife was seized, when void of all alarm,  
And vainly trusting to a footman's arm;  
Death in his hand, the Husband stood in view,  
Commanding silence, and obedience too;  
Forced to his carriage, sinking at his side,  
Madly he drove her—Vengeance was his  
guide.

All in that ruin Villars had prepared,  
And meant her fate and sorrow to have shared;  
There he design'd they should for ever dwell,  
The weeping pair of a monastic cell.

An ancient couple from their cottage went,  
Won by his pay, to this imprisonment;  
And all was order'd in his mind—the pain  
He must inflict, the shame she must sustain;  
But such his gentle spirit, such his love,  
The proof might fail of all he meant to prove.

Features so dear had still maintain'd their  
sway,

And looks so loved had taught him to obey;  
Rage and Revenge had yielded to the sight  
Of charms that waken wonder and delight;  
The harsher passions from the heart had flown,  
And Love regain'd his Subject and his  
Throne.

[The next Tale, and a number of others, were originally designed for a separate volume, to be entitled 'The Farewell and Return.' In a letter to Mrs. Leadbetter, written in 1823, the poet says:—'In my "Farewell and Return" I suppose a young man to take leave of his native place, and to exchange *farewells* with his friends and acquaintance there—in short, with as many characters as I have fancied I could manage. These, and their several situations and prospects, being briefly sketched, an interval is supposed to elapse; and our youth, a youth no more, *returns* to the scene of his early days. Twenty years have passed; and the interest, if there be any, consists in the completion, more or less unexpected, of the history of each person to whom he had originally bidden farewell.'

The reader will find the Tales, written on this plan, divided each into two or more sections; and will easily perceive where the *farewell* terminates, and the *return* begins.]

## TALE VI. THE FAREWELL AND RETURN

### I

I AM of age, and now, no more the Boy,  
Am ready Fortune's favours to enjoy,  
Were they, too, ready; but, with grief I  
speak,

Mine is the fortune that I yet must seek.  
And let me seek it; there's the world  
around—

And if not sought it never can be found.  
It will not come if I the chase decline;  
Wishes and wants will never make it mine.  
Then let me shake these lingering fears away;  
What one day must be, let it be to-day;  
Lest courage fail ere I the search commence,  
And resolution pall upon suspense.

Yet, while amid these well-known scenes  
I dwell,

Let me to friends and neighbours bid Fare-  
well.

First to our men of wealth—these are but  
few—

In duty bound I humbly bid adieu.

This is not painful, for they know me not,  
Fortune in different states has placed our  
lot;

It is not pleasant, for full well I know  
The lordly pity that the rich bestow—  
A proud contemptuous pity, by whose aid  
Their own triumphant virtues are display'd.—  
'Going, you say; and what intends the Lad,  
To seek his fortune? Fortune! is he mad?  
Has he the knowledge? is he duly taught?  
I think we know how Fortune should be  
sought.

Perhaps he takes his chance to sink or swim,  
Perhaps he dreams of Fortune's seeking him?

Life is his lottery, and away he flies,  
Without a ticket to obtain his prize:  
But never man acquired a weighty sum,  
Without foreseeing whence it was to come.'

Fortunes are made, if I the facts may  
state,—

Though poor myself, I know the fortunate:  
First, there's a knowledge of the way from  
whence

Good fortune comes—and that is sterling  
sense;

Then perseverance, never to decline  
The chase of riches till the prey is thine;  
And firmness, never to be drawn away  
By any passion from that noble prey—  
By love, ambition, study, travel, fame,  
Or the vain hope that lives upon a name.

The whistling Boy that holds the plough,  
Lured by the tale that soldiers tell,  
Resolves to part, yet knows not how  
To leave the land he loves so well.  
He now rejects the thought, and now  
Looks o'er the lea, and sighs 'Farewell!'

Farewell! the pensive Maiden cries,  
Who dreams of London, dreams awake—  
But when her favourite Lad she spies,  
With whom she loved her way to take,  
Then Doubts within her soul arise,  
And equal Hopes her bosom shake!

Thus, like the Boy, and like the Maid,  
I wish to go, yet tarry here,  
And now resolved, and now afraid:  
To minds disturb'd old views appear

In melancholy charms array'd,  
And once indifferent, now are dear.  
How shall I go, my fate to learn—  
And, oh ! how taught shall I return ?

## II

Yes!—twenty years have pass'd, and I am  
come,  
Unknown, unwelcomed, to my early home,  
A stranger striving in my walks to trace  
The youthful features in some aged face.  
On as I move, some curious looks I read ;  
We pause a moment, doubt, and then proceed :  
They're like what once I saw, but not the  
same,  
I lose the air, the features, and the name.  
Yet something seems like knowledge, but the  
change  
Confuses me, and all in him is strange :  
That bronzed old Sailor, with his wig awry—  
Sure he will know me ! No, he passes by.  
They seem like me in doubt ; but they can  
call  
Their friends around them ! I am lost to all.  
The very place is alter'd. What I left  
Seems of its space and dignity bereft :  
The streets are narrow, and the buildings  
mean ;  
Did I, or Fancy, leave them broad and clean ?  
The ancient church, in which I felt a pride,  
As struck by magic, is but half as wide ;  
The tower is shorter, the sonorous bell  
Tells not the hour as it was wont to tell ;  
The market dwindles, every shop and stall  
Sinks in my view ; there's littleness in all.  
Mine is the error ; prepossess'd I see ;  
And all the change I mourn is change in me.  
One object only is the same ; the sight  
Of the wide Ocean by the moon's pale light  
With her long ray of glory, that we mark  
On the wild waves when all beside is dark :  
This is the work of Nature, and the eye  
In vain the boundless prospect would descry ;  
What mocks our view cannot contracted be ;  
We cannot lessen what we cannot see.  
Would I could now a single Friend behold,  
Who would the yet mysterious facts unfold,  
That Time yet spares, and to a stranger show  
Th' events he wishes, and yet fears to know !  
Much by myself I might in listening glean,  
Mix'd with the crowd, unmark'd if not unseen,  
Uninterrupted I might ramble on,  
Nor cause an interest, nor a thought, in one ;

For who looks backward to a being tost  
About the world, forgotten long, and lost,  
For whom departing not a tear was shed,  
Who disappear'd, was missing, and was dead !  
Save that he left no grave, where some might  
pass,

And ask each other who that being was.  
I, as a ghost invisible, can stray  
Among the crowd, and cannot lose my way ;  
My ways are where the voice of man is known,  
Though no occasion offers for my own ;  
My eager mind to fill with food I seek,  
And, like the ghost, await for one to speak.  
See I not One whom I before have seen ?  
That face, though now untroubled and serene,  
That air, though steady now, that look,  
though tame,

Pertain to one, whom though I doubt to name,  
Yet was he not a dashing youth and wild,  
Proud as a man, and haughty when a child ?  
Talents were his ; he was in nature kind,  
With lofty, strong, and independent mind ;  
His father wealthy, but, in very truth,  
He was a rash, untamed, expensive youth ;  
And, as I now remember the report,  
Told how his father's money he would sport :  
Yet in his dress and manner now appears  
No sign of faults that stain'd his earlier years ;  
Mildness there seems, and marks of sober  
sense,

That bear no token of that wild expense  
Such as to ruin leads !—I may mistake,  
Yet may, perchance, a useful friendship  
make !

He looks as one whom I should not offend,  
Address'd as him whom I would make a  
friend.

Men with respect attend him.—He pro-  
ceeds

To yonder public room—why then he reads.  
Suppose me right—a mighty change is  
wrought ;  
But Time ere now has care and caution  
taught.

May I address him ? And yet, why afraid ?  
Deny he may, but he will not upbraid,  
Nor must I lose him, for I want his aid.

Propitious fate ! beyond my hope I find  
A being well-inform'd, and much inclined  
To solve my many doubts, and ease my  
anxious mind.

Now shall we meet, and he will give reply  
To all I ask !—How full of fears am I ;

Poor, nervous, trembling! what have I to fear?

Have I a wife, a child, one creature here,  
Whose health would bring me joy, whose  
death would claim a tear?

This is the time appointed, this the place:  
Now shall I learn, how some have run their  
race

With honour, some with shame; and I shall  
know

How man behaves in Fortune's ebb and  
flow;—

What wealth or want, what trouble, sorrow,  
joy,

Have been allotted to the girl and boy

Whom I left laughing at the ills of life,—  
Now the grave father, or the awful wife.  
Then shall I hear how tried the wise and good!  
How fall'n the house that once in honour  
stood!

And moving accidents, from war and fire and  
flood!

These shall I hear, if to his promise true;  
His word is pledged to tell me all he knew  
Of living men; and memory then will trace  
Those who no more with living men have  
place,

As they were borne to their last quiet homes—  
This shall I learn!—And lo! my Teacher  
comes.

## TALE VII. THE SCHOOL-FELLOW

### I

YES! I must leave thee, brother of my  
heart,

The world demands us, and at length we part;  
Thou whom that heart, since first it felt,  
approved—

I thought not why, nor question'd how I  
loved;

In my first thoughts, first notions, and first  
cares,

Associate: partner in my mind's affairs,  
In my young dreams, my fancies ill-express'd  
But well conceived, and to the heart address'd.

A fellow-reader in the books I read,  
A fellow-mourner in the tears I shed,  
A friend, partaking every grief and joy,  
A lively, frank, engaging, generous boy.

At school each other's prompters, day by  
day

Companions in the frolic or the fray;  
Prompt in disputes—we never sought the  
cause,

The laws of friendship were our only laws;  
We ask'd not how or why the strife began,  
But David's foe was foe to Jonathan.

In after-years my Friend, the elder boy,  
Would speak of Love, its tumult and its  
joy;

A new and strong emotion thus imprest,  
Prepared for pain to come the yielding breast;  
For though no object then the fancy found,  
She dreamt of darts, and gloried at the  
wound;

Smooth verse and tender tales the spirit  
moved,

And ere the Chloes came the Strephons loved.  
This is the Friend I leave; for he remains  
Bound to his home by strong but viewless  
chains:

Nor need I fear that his aspiring soul  
Will fail his adverse fortunes to control,  
Or lose the fame he merits: yet awhile  
The clouds may lour—but then his sun will  
smile.

Oh! Time, thou teller of men's fortunes, lend  
Thy aid, and be propitious to my Friend!  
Let me behold him prosperous, and his name  
Enroll'd among the darling sons of Fame;  
In love befriend him, and be his the bride,  
Proud of her choice, and of her lord the pride.  
'So shall my little bark attendant sail,'—  
(As Pope has sung)—and prosperous be the  
gale!

### II

HE is not here: the Youth I loved so well  
Dwells in some place where kindred spirits  
dwell:

But I shall learn. Oh! tell me of my Friend,  
With whom I hoped life's evening-calm to  
spend;

With whom was spent the morn, the happy  
morn!

When gay conceits and glorious views are  
born;

With whom conversing I began to find  
The early stirrings of an active mind,

That, done the tasks and lessons of the day,  
Sought for new pleasures in our untired way;  
And stray'd in fairy land, where much we  
long'd to stray.

Here he abides not! could not surely fix  
In this dull place, with these dull souls to mix;  
He finds his place where lively spirits meet,  
And loftier souls from baser kind retreat.

First, of my early Friend I gave the name,  
Well known to me, and, as I judged, to Fame;  
My grave informer doubted, then replied,  
'That Lad!—why, yes!—some ten years  
since he died.'

P. Died! and unknown! the man I loved  
so well!

But is this all? the whole that you can tell  
Of one so gifted?—

F. Gifted! why, in truth,  
You puzzle me; how gifted was the Youth?  
I recollect him, now—his long, pale face—  
He dress'd in drab, and walk'd as in a race.

P. Good Heaven! what did I not of him  
expect?

And is this all indeed you recollect—  
Of wit that charm'd me, with delightful ease—  
And gay good-humour that must ever  
please—

His taste, his genius! know you nought of  
these?

F. No, not of these:—but stop! in pass-  
ing near,

I've heard his flute—it was not much to hear:

As for his genius—let me not offend:

I never had a genius for a friend,

And doubt of yours; but still he did his  
best,

And was a decent Lad—there let him rest!

He lies in peace, with all his humble race,  
And has no stone to mark his burial place;  
Nor left he that which to the world might  
show

That he was one that world was bound to  
know,

For aught he gave it.—Here his story ends!

P. And is this all? This character my  
Friend's!

That may, alas! be mine—'a decent  
Lad!'

The very phrase would make a Poet mad!  
And he is gone!—Oh! proudly did I think

That we together at that fount should drink,  
Together climb the steep ascent of Fame,

Together gain an ever-during name,  
And give due credit to our native home—

Yet here he lies, without a name or tomb!

Perhaps not honour'd by a single tear,

Just enter'd in a parish-register,

With common dust, forgotten to remain—

And shall I seek, what thou could'st not  
obtain—

A name for men when I am dead to speak?—

Oh! let me something more substantial seek;

Let me no more on man's poor praise depend,

But learn one lesson from my buried Friend.

## TALE VIII. BARNABY; THE SHOPMAN

### I

FAREWELL! to him whom just across my  
way,

I see his shop attending day by day;  
Save on the Sunday, when he duly goes  
To his own church, in his own Sunday clothes.  
Young though he is, yet careful there he  
stands,

Opening his shop with his own ready hands;  
Nor scorns the broom that to and fro he  
moves.

Cleaning his way, for cleanliness he loves—  
But yet preserves not: in his zeal for trade  
He has his shop an ark for all things made;  
And there, in spite of his all-guarding eye,  
His sundry wares in strange confusion lie—

Delightful token of the haste that keeps  
Those mingled matters in their shapeless  
heaps;

Yet ere he rests, he takes them all away,  
And order smiles on the returning day.

Most ready tradesman he of men! alive  
To all that turns to money—he must thrive.  
Obsequious, civil, loath t' offend or trust,  
And full of awe for greatness—thrive he must;  
For well he knows to creep, and he in time,  
By wealth assisted, will aspire to climb.

Pains-taking lad he was, and with his slate  
For hours in useful meditation sate;  
Puzzled, and seizing every boy at hand,  
To make him—hard the labour!—under-  
stand;

But when of learning he enough possess'd  
For his affairs, who would might learn the  
rest ;

All else was useless when he had obtain'd  
Knowledge that told him what he lost or  
gain'd.

He envied no man for his learning ; he  
Who was not rich, was poor with BARNABY :  
But he for envy has no thought to spare,  
Nor love nor hate—his heart is in his ware.

Happy the man whose greatest pleasure lies  
In the fair trade by which he hopes to rise.  
To him how bright the opening day, how blest  
The busy noon, how sweet the evening rest !  
To him the nation's state is all unknown,  
Whose watchful eye is ever on his own.  
You talk of patriots, men who give up all,  
Yea, life itself, at their dear country's call !  
He look'd on such as men of other date,  
Men to admire, and not to imitate ;  
They as his Bible-Saints to him appear'd,  
Lost to the world, but still to be revered.

Yet there's a Widow, in a neighbouring  
street,  
Whom he contrives in Sunday-dress to meet ;  
Her's house and land ; and these are more  
delight

To him than learning, in the proverb's spite.

The Widow sees at once the Trader's views,  
And means to soothe him, flatter, and refuse :  
Yet there are moments when a woman fails  
In such design, and so the man prevails.  
Love she has not, but, in a guardless hour,  
May lose her purpose, and resign her power ;  
Yet all such hazard she resolves to run,  
Pleased to be woo'd, and fearless to be won.

Lovers like these, as dresses thrown aside,  
Are kept and shown to feed a woman's pride.  
Old-fashion'd, ugly, call them what she will,  
They serve as signs of her importance still.  
She thinks they might inferior forms adorn,  
And does not love to hear them used with  
scorn ;

Till on some day when she has need of dress,  
And none at hand to serve her in distress,  
She takes th' insulted robe, and turns about ;  
Long-hidden beauties one by one peer out.  
'Tis not so bad ! see, Jenny—I declare  
'Tis pretty well, and then 'tis lasting wear ;  
And what is fashion ?—if a woman's wise,  
She will the substance, not the shadow, prize ;  
'Tis a choice silk, and if I put it on,  
Off go these ugly trappings every one.'

The dress is worn, a friendly smile is raised,  
But the good lady for her courage praised—  
Till wonder dies.—The dress is worn with  
pride,

And not one trapping yet is cast aside.

Meanwhile the man his six-day toil renews,  
And on the seventh he worships Heaven, and  
woos.

I leave thee, Barnaby ; and if I see  
Thee once again, a Burgess thou wilt be.

## II

BUT how is this ? I left a thriving man,  
Hight BARNABY ! when he to trade began—  
Trade his delight and hope ; and, if alive,  
Doubt I had none that Barnaby would thrive :  
Yet here I see him, sweeping as before  
The very dust from forth the very door.  
So would a miser ! but, methinks, the shop  
Itself is meaner—has he made a stop ?

I thought I should at least a Burgess see,  
And lo ! 'tis but an older Barnaby ;  
With face more wrinkled, with a coat as bare  
As coats of his once begging kindred were,  
Brush'd to the thread that is distinctly seen,  
And beggarly would be, but that 'tis clean.

Why, how is this ? Upon a closer view,  
The shop is narrow'd : it is cut in two.  
Is all that business from its station fled ?  
Why, Barnaby ! thy very shop is dead !  
Now, what the cause my Friend will soon  
relate—

And what the fall from that predicted fate.

F. A common cause : it seems his lawful  
gains  
Came slowly forth, and came with care and  
pains.

These he, indeed, was willing to bestow,  
But still his progress to his point was slow,  
And might be quicken'd, ' could he cheat the  
eyes

Of all those rascal officers and spies,  
The Customs' greedy tribe, the wolves of the  
Excise.

Tea, coffee, spirits, laces, silks, and spice,  
And sundry drugs that bear a noble price,  
Are bought for little, but ere sold, the things  
Are deeply charged for duty of the king's.  
Now, if the servants of this king would keep  
At a kind distance, or would wink or sleep,  
Just till the goods in safety were disposed,  
Why then his labours would be quickly closed.

True! some have thriven,—but they the laws defied,  
And shunn'd the powers they should have satisfied!

Their way he tried, and finding some success,  
His heart grew stouter, and his caution less;  
Then—for why doubt, when placed in Fortune's way?—

There was a bank, and that was sure to pay.  
Yes, every partner in that thriving bank  
He judged a man of a superior rank.

Were *he* but one in a concern so grand—  
Why! he might build a house, and buy him land;

Then, too, the Widow, whom he loved so well,  
Would not refuse with such a man to dwell;  
And, to complete his views, he might be made  
A Borough-Justice, when he ceased to trade;  
For he had known—well pleased to know—  
a mayor

Who once had dealt in cheese and vinegar.

Who hastens to be rich, resembles him  
Who is resolved that he will quickly swim,  
And trusts his full-blown bladders! He,  
indeed,

With these supported, moves along with speed;

Helaults at those whom untried depths alarm,  
By caution led, and moved by strength of arm;  
Till in mid-way, the way his folly chose,  
His full-blown bladder bursts, and down he goes!

Or, if preserved, 'tis by their friendly aid  
Whom he despised as cautious and afraid.

Who could resist? Not Barnaby. Success  
Awhile his pride exalted—to depress.

Three years he pass'd in feverish hopes and fears,

When fled the profits of the former years;  
Shook by the Law's strong arm, all he had gain'd

He dropp'd—and hopeless, penniless remain'd.

The cruel Widow, whom he yet pursued,  
Was kind but cautious, then was stern and rude.

'Should wealth, now hers, from that dear man which came,

Be thrown away to prop a smuggler's fame?'  
She spake insulting; and with many a sigh,  
The fallen Trader passed her mansion by.

Fear, shame, and sorrow, for a time endured,

Th' adventurous man was ruin'd, but was cured—

His weakness pitied, and his once-good name  
The means of his returning peace became.

He was assisted, to his shop withdrew,  
Half let, half rented, and began anew,  
To smile on custom, that in part return'd,  
With the small gains that he no longer spurn'd.  
Warn'd by the past, he rises with the day,  
And tries to sweep off sorrow.—*Sweep away!*

## TALE IX. JANE

### I

KNOWN but of late, I yet am loth to leave  
The gentle JANE, and wonder why I grieve—  
Not for her wants, for she has no distress,  
She has no suffering that her looks express,  
Her air or manner—hers the mild good sense  
That wins its way by making no pretence.

When yet a child, her dying mother knew  
What, left by her, the widow'd man would do,  
And gave her Jane, for she had power, enough  
To live in ease—of love and care a proof.  
Enabled thus, the mind is kind to all—  
Is pious too, and that without a call.

Not that she doubts of calls that Heav'n has sent—

Calls to believe, or warnings to repent;

But that she rests upon the Word divine,  
Without presuming on a dubious sign;  
A sudden light, the momentary zeal  
Of those who rashly hope, and warmly feel;  
These she rejects not, nor on these relies,  
And neither feels the influence nor denies.  
Upon the sure and written Word she trusts,  
And by the Law Divine her life adjusts;  
She blames not her who other creed prefers,  
And all she asks is charity for hers.

Her great example is her gracious Lord,  
Her hope his promise, and her guide his

Word;

Her quiet alms are known to God alone,  
Her left hand knows not what her right has done;

Her talents, not the few, she well improves,  
And puts to use in labour that she loves.

Pensive, though good, I leave thee, gentle  
maid—

In thee confiding, of thy peace afraid,  
In a strange world to act a trying part,  
With a soft temper, and a yielding heart!

## II

*P.* How fares my gentle Jane, with spirit  
meek,

Whose fate with some foreboding care I seek;  
Her whom I pitied in my pride, while she,  
For many a cause more weighty, pitied me;  
For she has wonder'd how the idle boy  
His head or hands would usefully employ—  
At least for thee his grateful spirit pray'd,  
And now to ask thy fortune is afraid.—  
—How fares the gentle Jane?—

*F.* Know first, she fares

As one who bade adieu to earthly cares;  
As one by virtue guided, and who, tried  
By man's deceit, has never lost her guide.

Her age I knew not, but it seem'd the age  
When Love is wont a serious war to wage  
In female hearts,—when hopes and fears are  
strong,

And 'tis a fatal step to place them wrong;  
For childish fancies now have ta'en their  
flight,

And love's impressions are no longer light.

Just at this time—what time I do not tell—  
There came a Stranger in the place to dwell;  
He seem'd as one who sacred truth reveres,  
And like her own his sentiments and years;  
His person manly, with engaging mien,  
His spirit quiet, and his looks serene.  
He kept from all disgraceful deeds aloof,  
Severely tried, and found temptation-proof:  
This was by most unquestion'd, and the few  
Who made inquiry said report was true.

His very choice of our neglected place  
Endear'd him to us—'twas an act of grace;  
And soon to Jane, our unobtrusive maid,  
In still respect was his attention paid;  
Each in the other found what both approved,  
Good sense and quiet manners: these they  
loved.

So came regard, and then esteem, and then  
The kind of friendship women have with  
men:

At length t'was love, but candid, open, fair,  
Such as became their years and character.

In their discourse, religion had its place,  
When he of doctrines talked, and she of grace.  
He knew the different sects, the varying  
creeds,

While she, less learned, spoke of virtuous  
deeds;

He dwelt on errors into which we fall,  
She on the gracious remedy for all;  
So between both, his knowledge and her own,  
Was the whole Christian to perfection shown.  
Though neither quite approved the other's  
part—

Hers without learning, his without a heart—  
Still to each other they were dear, were good,  
And all these matters kindly understood;  
For Jane was liberal, and her friend could  
trust,—

'He thinks not with me! but is fair and just.'

Her prudent lover to her man of law,  
Show'd how he lived: it seem'd without a  
flaw;

She saw their moderate means—content with  
what she saw.

Jane had no doubts—with so much to  
admire,

She judg'd it insult farther to inquire.

The lover sought—what lover brooks de-  
lay?—

For full assent, and for an early day—

And he would construe well the soft con-  
senting Nay!

The day was near, and Jane, with book in  
hand,

Sat down to read—perhaps might under-  
stand:

For what prevented?—say, she seem'd to  
read;

When one there came, her own sad cause to  
plead;

A stranger she, who fearless named that cause,  
A breach in love's and honour's sacred  
laws.

'In a far country, Lady, bleak and wild,  
Report has reach'd me! how art thou be-  
guiled!

Or dared he tell thee that for ten sad years  
He saw me struggling with fond hopes and  
fears?

'From my dear home he won me, blest and  
free!

To be his victim.'—'Madam, who is he?'

'Not yet thy husband, Lady: no! not yet;  
For he has first to pay a mighty debt.'



'Speaks he not of religion?'—'So he speaks,

When he the ruin of his victim seeks.  
How smooth and gracious were his words,  
how sweet—

The fiend his master prompting his deceit !  
Me he with kind instruction led to trust  
In one who seem'd so grave, so kind, so just.  
Books to amuse me, and inform, he brought,  
Like that old serpent with temptation fraught ;  
His like the precepts of the wise appear'd,  
Till I imbibed the vice I had not fear'd.  
By pleasant tales and dissertations gay,  
He wiled the lessons of my youth away.

'Of moral duties he would talk, and prove  
They gave a sanction, and commanded love ;  
His sober smile at forms and rites was shown,  
To make my mind depraved, and like his own.

'But wilt thou take him ? wilt thou ruin take,  
With a grave robber, a religious rake ?

'Tis not to serve thee, Lady, that I came—  
'Tis not to claim him, 'tis not to reclaim—  
But 'tis that he may for my wrongs be paid,  
And feel the vengeance of the wretch he made.

'Not for myself I thy attention claim :  
My children dare not take their father's name ;  
They know no parent's love—love will not  
dwell with shame.

What law would force, he not without it gives,  
And hates each living wretch, because it lives !  
Yet, with these sinful stains, the man is mine :  
How will he curse me for this rash design !  
Yes—I will bear his curse, but him will not  
resign.

'I see thee grieved ; but, Lady, what thy  
grief ?

It may be pungent, but it must be brief.  
Pious thou art ; but what will profit thee,  
Match'd with a demon, woman's piety ?  
Not for thy sake my wrongs and wrath I tell,  
Revenge I seek ! but yet, I wish thee well.

And now I leave thee ! Thou art warn'd by  
one,  
The rock on which her peace was wreck'd to  
shun.'

The Lover heard ; but not in time to stay  
A woman's vengeance in its headlong way :  
Yet he essay'd, with no unpractised skill,  
To warp the judgment, or at least the will ;  
To raise such tumults in the poor weak heart,  
That Jane, believing all—yet should not dare  
to part.

But there was Virtue in her mind that strove  
With all his eloquence, and all her love ;  
He told what hope and frailty dared to tell,  
And all was answered by a stern *Farewell !*

Home with his consort he return'd once  
more ;

And they resumed the life they led before.  
Not so our maiden. She, before resign'd,  
Had now the anguish of a wounded mind—  
And felt the languid grief that the deserted  
find ;

On him she had reposed each worldly view,  
And when he fail'd, the world itself withdrew,  
With all its prospects. Nothing could restore  
To life its value ; hope would live no more :  
Pensive by nature, she can not sustain  
The sneer of pity that the heartless feign ;  
But to the pressure of her griefs gives way,  
A quiet victim, and a patient prey :  
The one bright view that she had cherish'd dies,  
And other hope must from the future rise.

She still extends to grief and want her aid,  
And by the comfort she imparts, is paid :  
Death is her soul's relief : to him she flies  
For consolation that this world denies.

No more to life's false promises she clings,  
She longs to change this troubled state of  
things,

Till every rising morn the happier prospect  
brings.

## TALE X. THE ANCIENT MANSION

### I

To part is painful ; nay, to bid adieu  
Ev'n to a favourite spot is painful too.  
That fine old Seat, with all those oaks around,  
Oft have I view'd with reverence so profound,  
As something sacred dwelt in that delicious  
ground.

There, with its tenantry about, reside  
A genuine English race, the country's  
pride ;

And now a Lady, last of all that race,  
Is the departing spirit of the place.  
Hers is the last of all that noble blood,  
That flow'd through generations brave and  
good ;

And if there dwells a native pride in her,  
It is the pride of name and character.

True, she will speak, in her abundant zeal,  
Of stainless honour; that she needs must  
feel;

She must lament, that she is now the last  
Of all who gave such splendour to the past.

Still are her habits of the ancient kind;  
She knows the poor, the sick, the lame, the  
blind:

She holds, so she believes, her wealth in trust;  
And being kind, with her, is being just.  
Though soul and body she delights to aid,  
Yet of her skill she's prudently afraid:  
So to her chaplain's care she *this* commends,  
And when *that* craves, the village doctor sends.

At church attendance she requires of all,  
Who would be held in credit at the Hall;  
A due respect to each degree she shows,  
And pays the debt that every mortal owes;  
'Tis by opinion that respect is led,  
The rich esteem because the poor are fed.

Her servants all, if so we may describe  
That ancient, grave, observant, decent tribe,  
Who with her share the blessings of the Hall,  
Are kind but grave, are proud but courteous  
all—

Proud of their lucky lot! behold, how stands  
That grey-haired butler, waiting her com-  
mands;

The Lady dines, and every day he feels  
That his good mistress falters in her meals.  
With what respectful manners he intreats  
That she would eat—yet Jacob little eats;  
When she forbears, his supplicating eye  
Intreats the noble dame once more to try.  
Their years the same; and he has never  
known

Another place; and this he deems his own,—  
All appertains to him. Whate'er he sees  
Is *ours*!—'our house, our land, our walks,  
our trees!'

But still he fears the time is just at hand,  
When he no more shall in that presence stand;  
And he resolves, with mingled grief and pride,  
To serve no being in the world beside.  
'He has enough,' he says, with many a sigh,  
'For him to serve his God, and learn to die:  
He and his lady shall have heard their call,  
And the new folk, the strangers, may have  
all.'

But, leaving these to their accustom'd way,  
The Seat itself demands a short delay.

We all have interest there—the trees that grow  
Near to that seat, to that their grandeur owe;  
They take, but largely pay, and equal grace  
bestow:

They hide a part, but still the part they shade  
Is more inviting to our fancy made;  
And, if the eye be robb'd of half its sight,  
Th' imagination feels the more delight.  
These giant oaks by no man's order stand,  
Heaven did the work; by no man was it  
plann'd.

Here I behold no puny works of art,  
None give me reasons why these views impart  
Such charm to fill the mind, such joy to swell  
the heart.

These very pinnacles, and turrets small,  
And windows dim, have beauty in them all.  
How stately stand yon pines upon the hill,  
How soft the murmurs of that living rill,  
And o'er the park's tall paling, scarcely  
higher,

Peeps the low Church and shows the modest  
spire.

Unnumber'd violets on those banks appear,  
And all the first-born beauties of the year.  
The grey-green blossoms of the willows bring  
The large wild bees upon the labouring wing.  
Then comes the Summer with augmented  
pride,

Whose pure small streams along the valleys  
glide:

Her richer Flora their brief charms display;  
And, as the fruit advances, fall away.  
Then shall th' autumnal yellow clothe the leaf,  
What time the reaper binds the burden'd  
sheaf:

Then silent groves denote the dying year,  
The morning frost, and noon-tide gossamer;  
And all be silent in the scene around,  
All save the distant sea's uncertain sound,  
Or here and there the gun whose loud report  
Proclaims to man that Death is but his sport:  
And then the wintry winds begin to blow,  
Then fall the flaky stars of gathering snow,  
When on the thorn the ripening sloe, yet blue,  
Takes the bright varnish of the morning dew;  
The aged moss grows brittle on the pale,  
The dry boughs splinter in the windy gale,  
And every changing season of the year  
Stamps on the scene its English character.

Farewell! a prouder Mansion I may see,  
But much must meet in that which equals  
thee!

## II

I LEAVE the town, and take a well-known way,

To that old Mansion in the closing day,  
When beams of golden light are shed around,  
And sweet is every sight and every sound.  
Pass but this hill, and I shall then behold  
The Seat so honour'd, so admired of old,  
And yet admired—

Alas ! I see a change,  
Of odious kind, and lamentably strange.  
Who had done this ? The good old Lady lies  
Within her tomb : but, who could this advise ?  
What barbarous hand could all this mischief  
do,

And spoil a noble house to make it new ?  
Who had done this ? Some genuine Son of Trade  
Has all this dreadful devastation made ;  
Some man with line and rule, and evil eye,  
Who could no beauty in a tree descry,  
Save in a clump, when stationed by his hand,  
And standing where his genius bade them  
stand ;

Some true admirer of the time's reform,  
Who strips an ancient dwelling like a storm,  
Strips it of all its dignity and grace,  
To put his own dear fancies in their place.  
He hates concealment : all that was enclosed  
By venerable wood, is now exposed,  
And a few stripling elms and oaks appear,  
Fenced round by boards, to keep them from  
the deer.

I miss the grandeur of the rich old scene,  
And see not what these clumps and patches  
mean !

This shrubby belt that runs the land around  
Shuts freedom out ! what being likes a bound ?  
The shrubs indeed, and ill-placed flowers, are  
gay,

And some would praise ; I wish they were  
away,  
That in the wild-wood maze I as of old might  
stray.

The things themselves are pleasant to behold,  
But not like those which we behold of old,—  
That half-hid mansion, with its wide domain,  
Unbound and unsubdued !—but sighs are  
vain ;

It is the rage of Taste—the rule and compass  
reign.

As thus my spleen upon the view I fed,  
A man approach'd me, by his grandchild led—

A blind old man, and she a fair young maid,  
Listening in love to what her grandsire said.

And thus with gentle voice he spoke—

' Come lead me, lassie, to the shade,  
Where willows grow beside the brook ;  
For well I know the sound it made,  
When dashing o'er the stony rill,  
It murmur'd to St. Osyth's Mill.'

The Lass replied—' The trees are fied,  
They've cut the brook a straighter bed :  
No shades the present lords allow,  
The miller only murmurs now ;  
The waters now his mill forsake,  
And form a pond they call a lake.'

' Then, lassie, lead thy grandsire on,  
And to the holy water bring ;  
A cup is fasten'd to the stone,  
And I would taste the healing spring,  
That soon its rocky cist forsakes,  
And green its mossy passage makes.'

' The holy spring is turn'd aside,  
The rock is gone, the stream is dried ;  
The plough has level'd all around,  
And here is now no holy ground.'

' Then, lass, thy grandsire's footsteps guide  
To Bulmer's Tree, the giant oak,  
Whose boughs the keeper's cottage hide,  
And part the church-way lane o'erlook ;  
A boy, I climb'd the topmost bough,  
And I would feel its shadow now.

' Or, lassie, lead me to the west,  
Where grew the elm-trees thick and tall,  
Where rooks unnumber'd build their nest—  
Deliberate birds, and prudent all :  
Their notes, indeed, are harsh and rude,  
But they're a social multitude.'

' The rooks are shot, the trees are fell'd,  
And nest and nursery all expell'd ;  
With better fate the giant-tree,  
Old Bulmer's Oak, is gone to sea.  
The church-way walk is now no more,  
And men must other ways explore :  
Though this indeed promotion gains,  
For this the park's new wall contains ;  
And here I fear we shall not meet  
A shade—although, perchance, a seat.'

' O then, my lassie, lead the way  
To Comfort's Home, the ancient inn :  
That something holds, if we can pay—  
Old David is our living kin ;

A servant once, he still preserves  
His name, and in his office serves.  
'Alas! that mine should be the fate  
Old David's sorrows to relate:  
But they were brief; not long before  
He died, his office was no more.  
The kennel stands upon the ground,  
With something of the former sound.'

'O then,' the grieving Man replied,  
'No further, lassie, let me stray;  
Here's nothing left of ancient pride,  
Of what was grand, of what was gay:  
But all is chang'd, is lost, is sold—  
All, all that's left is chilling cold.  
I seek for comfort here in vain,  
Then lead me to my cot again.'

## TALE XI. THE MERCHANT

### I

Lo! one appears, to whom if I should dare  
To say *farewell*, the lordly man would stare,  
Would stretch his goodly form some inches  
higher,

And then, without a single word, retire;  
Or from his state might haply condescend  
To doubt his memory—'Ha! your name,  
my friend!'

He is the master of these things we see,  
Those vessels proudly riding by the quay;  
With all those mountain heaps of coal that lie,  
For half a county's wonder and supply.  
Boats, cables, anchors, all to him pertain,—  
A swimming fortune, all his father's gain.  
He was a porter on the quay, and one  
Proud of his fortune, prouder of his son;—  
Who was ashamed of him, and much distress'd  
To see his father was no better dress'd.  
Yet for this parent did the son erect  
A tomb—'tis whisper'd, he must not expect  
The like for him, when he shall near it  
sleep,—

Where we behold the marble cherubs weep.

There are no merchants who with us reside  
In half his state,—no wonder he has pride;  
Then he parades around that vast estate,  
As if he spurn'd the slaves that make him  
great;

Speaking in tone so high, as if the ware  
Was nothing worth—at least not worth his  
care;

Yet should he not these bulky stores contemn,  
For all his glory he derives from them;  
And were it not for that neglected store,  
This great rich man would be extremely poor.

Generous, men call him, for he deigns to  
give;

He condescends to say the poor must live:

Yet in his seamen not a sign appears,  
That they have much respect, or many fears;  
With inattention they their patron meet,  
As if they thought his dignity a cheat;  
Or of himself as, having much to do  
With their affairs, he very little knew;  
As if his ways to them so well were known,  
That they might hear, and bow, and take  
their own.

He might contempt for men so humble feel,  
But this experience taught him to conceal;  
For sailors do not to a lord at land  
As to their captain in submission stand;  
Nor have mere pomp and pride of look or  
speech,  
Been able yet respect or awe to teach.

Guns, when with powder charged, will make  
a noise,  
To frighten babes, and be the sport of boys;  
But when within men find there's nothing  
more,

They shout contemptuous at the idle roar.  
Thus will our lofty man to all appear,  
With nothing charged that they respect or  
fear.

His Lady, too, to her large purse applies,  
And all she fancies at the instant buys.  
How bows the market, when, from stall to  
stall,

She walks attended! how respectful all!  
To her free orders every maid attends,  
And strangers wonder what the woman  
spends.

There is an auction, and the people shy,  
Are loth to bid, and yet desire to buy.  
Jealous they gaze with mingled hope and  
fear,

Of buying cheaply, and of paying dear.  
They see the hammer with determined air  
Seized for despatch, and bid in pure despair!

They bid—the hand is quiet as before,—  
Still stands old Puff till one advances more.—  
Behold great madam, gliding through the  
crowd :

Hear her too bid—decisive tone and loud !  
'Going ! 'tis gone !' the hammer-holder  
cries—

'Joy to you, Lady ! you have gain'd a prize.'  
Thus comes and goes the wealth, that,  
saved or spent,

Buys not a moment's credit or content.  
*Farewell !* your fortune I forbear to guess ;  
For chance, as well as sense, may give success.

II

P. SAY, what yon buildings, neat indeed,  
but low,  
So much alike, in one commodious row ?

F. You see our Alms-house : ancient men,  
decay'd,  
Are here sustain'd, who lost their way in  
trade ;  
Here they have all that sober men require—  
So thought the Poet—'meat, and clothes,  
and fire ;'

A little garden to each house pertains,  
Convenient each, and kept with little pains.  
Here for the sick are nurse and medicine  
found ;

Here walks and shaded alleys for the sound ;  
Books of devotion on the shelves are placed,  
And not forbidden are the books of taste.  
The Church is near them—in a common  
seat

The pious men with grateful spirit meet :  
Thus from the world, which they no more  
admire,  
They all in silent gratitude retire.

P. And is it so ? Have all, with grateful  
mind,  
The world relinquish'd, and its ways resign'd ?  
Look they not back with lingering love and  
slow,  
And fain would once again the oft-tried  
follies know ?

F. Too surely some ! We must not think  
that all,  
Call'd to be hermits, would obey the call ;  
We must not think that all forget the state  
In which they moved, and bless their humbler  
fate ;  
But all may here the waste of life retrieve,  
And, ere they leave the world, its vices leave.

See yonder man, who walks apart, and  
seems

Wrapt in some fond and visionary schemes ;  
Who looks uneasy, as a man oppress'd  
By that large copper badge upon his breast.  
His painful shame, his self-tormenting pride,  
Would all that's visible in bounty hide ;  
And much his anxious breast is swell'd with  
woe,

That where he goes his badge must with him  
go.

P. Who then is he ? Do I behold aright ?  
My lofty Merchant in this humble plight !  
Still has he pride ?

F. If common fame be just,  
He yet has pride,—the pride that licks the  
dust ;

Pride that can stoop, and feed upon the base  
And wretched flattery of this humbling place ;  
Nay, feeds himself ! his failing is avow'd,  
He of the cause that made him poor is proud ;  
Proud of his greatness, of the sums he spent,  
And honours shown him wheresoe'er he went.

Yes ! there he walks, that lofty man is  
he,  
Who was so rich ; but great he could not  
be.

Now to the paupers who about him stand,  
He tells of wonders by his bounty plann'd,  
Tells of his traffic, where his vessels sail'd,  
And what a trade he drove—before he fail'd ;  
Then what a failure, not a paltry sum,  
Like a mean trader, but for half a plum ;  
His Lady's wardrobe was appraised so high,  
At his own sale, that nobody would buy !—  
'But she is gone,' he cries, 'and never saw  
The spoil and havoc of our cruel law ;  
My steeds, our chariot that so roll'd along,  
Admired of all ! they sold them for a song.  
You all can witness what my purse could do,  
And now I wear a badge like one of you,  
Who in my service had been proud to live,—  
And this is all a thankless town will give.  
I, who have raised the credit of that town,  
And gave it, thankless as it is, renown—  
Who've done what no man there had done  
before,

Now hide my head within an Alms-house  
door—  
Deprived of all—my wife, my wealth, my  
vote,  
And in this blue defilement—*Curse the  
Coat !*

## TALE XII. THE BROTHER BURGESSES

## I

TWO busy BROTHERS in our place reside,  
And wealthy each, his party's boast and  
pride;

Sons of one father, of two mothers born,  
They hold each other in true party-scorn.

JAMES is the one who for the people fights,  
The sturdy champion of their dubious rights;  
Merchant and seaman rough, but not the less  
Keen in pursuit of his own happiness;  
And what his happiness?—To see his store  
Of wealth increase, till Mammon groans, 'No  
more!'

JAMES goes to church—because his father  
went,  
But does not hide his leaning to dissent;  
Reasons for this, whoe'er may frown, he'll  
speak—

Yet the old pew receives him once a week.

CHARLES is a churchman, and has all the  
zeal

That a strong member of his church can feel;  
A loyal subject is the name he seeks;  
He of 'his King and Country' proudly  
speaks:

He says, his brother and a rebel-crew,  
Minded like him, the nation would undo,  
If they had power, or were esteem'd enough  
Of those who had, to bring their plans to  
proof.

JAMES answers sharply—'I will never place  
My hopes upon a Lordship or a Grace!  
To some great man you bow, to greater he,  
Who to the greatest bends his supple knee,  
That so the manna from the head may drop,  
And at the lowest of the kneelers stop.  
Lords call you loyal, and on them you call  
To spare you something from our plunder'd  
all:

If tricks like these to slaves can treasure bring,  
Slaves well may shout their hoarse for  
"Church and King!"'

'Brother!' says Charles,—'yet brother  
is a name

I own with pity, and I speak with shame,—  
One of these days you'll surely lead a mob,  
And then the hangman will conclude the job.'

'And would you, Charles, in that unlucky  
case,  
Beg for his life whose death would bring  
disgrace

On you, and all the loyal of our race?  
Your worth would surely from the halter  
bring

One neck, and I a patriot then might sing—  
A brother patriot I—God save our noble  
king.'

'James!' said the graver man, in manner'  
grave—

'Your neck I could not, I your soul would  
save;

Oh! ere that day, alas, too likely! come,  
I would prepare your mind to meet your  
doom,

That then the priest, who prays with that  
bad race

Of men, may find you not devoid of grace.'  
These are the men who, from their seats  
above,

Hear frequent sermons on fraternal love;  
Nay, each approves, and answers—'Very  
true!

Brother would heed it, were he not a Jew.'

## II

P. READ I aright? beneath this stately  
stone

THE BROTHERS rest in peace, their grave is  
one!

What friend, what fortune interfered, that  
they

Take their long sleep together, clay with clay?  
How came it thus?—

F. It was their own request,  
By both repeated, that they thus might rest.

P. 'Tis well! Did friends at length the  
pair unite?

Or was it done because the deed was right?  
Did the cool spirit of enfeebling age

Chill the warm blood, and calm the party  
rage,

And kindly lead them, in their closing day,  
To put their animosity away,

Incline their hearts to live in love and peace,  
And bid the ferment in each bosom cease?

F. Rich men have runners, who will to  
and fro

In search of food for their amusement go ;  
Who watch their spirits, and with tales of  
grief

Yield to their melancholy minds relief ;  
Who of their foes will each mishap relate,  
And of their friends the fall or failings state.

One of this breed—the Jackall who supplied  
Our Burgess Charles with food for spleen and  
pride—

Before he utter'd what his memory brought,  
On its effect, in doubtful matters, thought,  
Lest he, perchance, in his intent might trip,  
Or a strange fact might indiscreetly slip ;—  
But he one morning had a tale to bring,  
And felt full sure he need not weigh the thing ;  
*That* must be welcome ! With a smiling face  
He watch'd th' accustom'd nod, and took  
his place.

' Well ! you have news—I see it—Good,  
my friend,

No preface, Peter. Speak, man, I attend.'

' Then, sir, I'm told, nay, 'tis beyond  
dispute,

Our Burgess James is routed horse and foot ;  
He'll not be seen ; a clerk for him appears,  
And their precautions testify their fears ;  
Before the week be ended you shall see,  
That our famed patriot will a bankrupt be.'

' Will he by—— ! No, I will not be profane,  
But *James* a bankrupt ! Boy, my hat and cane.

No ! he'll refuse my offers—Let me think !  
So would I his : here, give me pen and ink.  
There ! that will do.—What ! let my father's  
son,

My brother, want, and I—away ! and run,  
Run as for life, and then return—but stay  
To take his message—now, away, away !'

The pride of James was shaken as he read—

The Brothers met—the angry spirit fled :  
Few words were needed—in the look of each  
There was a language words can never reach ;  
But when they took each other's hand, and  
press'd,

Subsiding tumult sank to endless rest ;  
Nor party wrath with quick affection strove,  
Drown'd in the tears of reconciling love.

Affairs confused, and business at a stand,  
Were soon set right by Charles's powerful  
hand ;

The rudest mind in this rude place enjoy'd  
The pleasing thought of enmity destroy'd,  
And so destroy'd, that neither spite nor  
spleen,

Nor peevish look from that blest hour were  
seen ;

Yet each his party and his spirit kept,  
Though all the harsh and angry passions  
slept.

P. And they too sleep ! and, at their joint  
request,

Within one tomb, beneath one stone, they  
rest !

## TALE XIII. THE DEAN'S LADY

### I

NEXT, to a LADY I must bid adieu—  
Whom some in mirth or malice call a '*Blue*.'  
There needs no more—when that same word  
is said,

The men grow shy, respectful, and afraid ;  
Save the choice friends who in her colour dress,  
And all her praise in words like hers express.

Why should proud man in man that know-  
ledge prize,

Which he affects in woman to despise ?  
Is he not envious when a lady gains,  
In hours of leisure, and with little pains,  
What he in many a year with painful toil  
obtains ?

For surely knowledge should not odious grow,  
Nor ladies be despised for what they know ;  
Truth to no sex confined, her friends invites,  
And woman, long restrain'd, demands her  
rights.

Nor should a light and odious name be thrown  
On the fair dame who makes that knowledge  
known—

Who bravely dares the world's sarcastic sneer,  
And what she is, is willing to appear.

' And what she is not !' peevish man re-  
plies,

His envy owning what his pride denies :  
But let him, envious as he is, repair  
To this sage Dame, and meet conviction  
there.

MIRANDA sees her morning levee fill'd  
With men, in every art and science skill'd—  
Men who have gain'd a name, whom she  
invites,

Because in men of genius she delights.  
To these she puts her questions, that produce  
Discussion vivid, and discourse abstruse:  
She no opinion for its boldness spares,  
But loves to show her audience what she dares;  
The creeds of all men she takes leave to sift,  
And, quite impartial, turns her own adrift.

Her noble mind, with independent force,  
Her Rector questions on his late discourse;  
Perplex'd and pain'd, he wishes to retire  
From one whom critics, nay, whom crowds,  
admire—

From her whose faith on no man's dictate  
leans,

Who her large creed from many a teacher  
gleans;

Who for herself will judge, debate, decide,  
And be her own 'philosopher and guide.'

Why call a lady *Blue*? It is because  
She reads, converses, studies for applause;  
And therefore all that she desires to know  
Is just as much as she can fairly show.  
The real knowledge we in secret hide,  
It is the counterfeit that makes our pride.

'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing!'—  
So sings the Poet, and so let him sing:  
But if from little learning danger rose,  
I know not who in safety could repose.  
The evil rises from our own mistake,  
When we our ignorance for knowledge take;  
Or when the little that we have, through  
pride,

And vain poor self-love view'd, is magnified.  
Nor is your deepest Azure always free  
From these same dangerous calls of vanity.

Yet of the sex are those who never show,  
By way of exhibition, what they know.  
Their books are read and praised, and so are  
they,

But all without design, without display.  
Is there not One who reads the hearts of men,  
And paints them strongly with unrivall'd pen?  
All their fierce Passions in her scenes appear,  
Terror she bids arise, bids fall the tear;  
Looks in the close recesses of the mind,  
And gives the finish'd portraits to mankind,  
By skill conducted, and to Nature true,—  
And yet no man on earth would call JOANNA  
Blue!

Not so MIRANDA! She is ever prest  
To give opinions, and she gives her best.  
To these with gentle smile her guests incline,  
Who come to hear, improve, applaud,—and  
dine.

Her hungry mind on every subject feeds;  
She Adam Smith and Dugald Stewart reads;  
Locke entertains her, and she wonders why  
His famous Essay is consider'd dry.

For her amusement in her vacant hours  
Are earths and rocks, and animals and flowers:  
She could the farmer at his work assist,  
A systematic agriculturist.

Some men, indeed, would curb the female  
mind,

Nor let us see that they themselves are blind;  
But—thank our stars!—the liberal times  
allow,

That all may think, and men have rivals  
now.

Miranda deems all knowledge might be  
gain'd—

'But she is idle, nor has much attain'd;  
Men are in her deceived; she knows at  
most

A few light matters, for she scorns to boast.  
Her mathematic studies she resign'd—  
They did not suit the genius of her mind.

She thought indeed the higher parts sublime,  
But then they took a monstrous deal of time!

Frequent and full the letters she delights  
To read in part; she names not him who  
writes—

But here and there a precious sentence shows,  
Telling what literary debts she owes.

Works, yet unprinted, for her judgment come,  
'Alas!' she cries, 'and I must seal their  
doom.

Sworn to be just, the judgment gives me  
pain—

Ah! why must truth be told, or man be  
vain?'

Much she has written, and still deigns to  
write,

But not an effort yet must see the light.

'Cruel!' her friends exclaim; 'unkind,  
unjust!'

But, no! the envious mass she will not trust;  
Content to hear that fame is due to her,  
Which on her works the world might not  
confer—

Content with loud applauses while she lives;  
Unfelt the pain the cruel critic gives.



## II

P. Now where the Learned Lady? Doth she live,  
Her dinners yet and sentiments to give—  
The Dean's wise consort, with the many friends,  
From whom she borrows, and to whom she lends  
Her precious maxims?

F. Yes, she lives to shed  
Her light around her, but her Dean is dead.  
Seen her I have, but seldom could I see:  
Borrow she could not, could not lend to me.  
Yet, I attended, and beheld the tribe  
Attending too, whom I will not describe—  
Miranda Thomson! Yes, I sometimes found  
A seat among a circle so profound;  
When all the science of the age combined  
Was in that room, and hers the master-mind.  
Well I remember the admiring crowd,  
Who spoke their wonder and applause aloud;  
They strove who highest should her glory raise,  
And cramm'd the hungry mind with honied praise—

While she, with grateful hand, a table spread,  
The Dean assenting—but the Dean is dead;  
And though her sentiments are still divine,  
She asks no more her auditors to dine.

Once from her lips came wisdom; when she spoke,  
Her friends in transport or amazement broke.  
Now to her dictates there attend but few,  
And they expect to meet attention too;  
Respect she finds is purchased at some cost,  
And deference is withheld, when dinner's lost.

She, once the guide and glory of the place,  
Exists between oblivion and disgrace;  
Praise once afforded, now,—they say not why,

They dare not say it—fickle men deny;  
That buzz of fame a new Minerva cheers,  
Which our deserted queen no longer hears.  
Old, but not wise, forsaken, not resign'd,  
She gives to honours past her feeble mind,  
Back to her former state her fancy moves,  
And lives on past applause, that still she loves;

Yet holds in scorn the fame no more in view,  
And flies the glory that would not pursue  
To yon small cot, a poorly jointured *Blue*.

## TALE XIV. THE WIFE AND WIDOW

## I

I LEAVE SOPHIA; it would please me well,  
Before we part, on so much worth to dwell:  
'Tis said of one who lived in times of strife,  
There was no boyhood in his busy life;  
Born to do all that mortal being can,  
The thinking child became at once the man;  
So this fair girl in early youth was led,  
By reasons strong in early youth, to wed.

In her new state her prudence was her guide,  
And of experience well the place supplied;  
With life's important business full in view,  
She had no time for its amusements too;  
She had no practised look man's heart  
t' allure,

No frown to kill him, and no smile to cure;  
No art coquettish, nothing of the prude;  
She was with strong yet simple sense endued,  
Intent on duties, and resolved to shun  
Nothing that ought to be, and could be, done.

A Captain's wife, with him she long  
sustain'd

The toil of war, and in a camp remain'd;  
Her husband wounded, with a child in arms,  
She nursed them both, unheeded all alarms:  
All useless terror in her soul suppress'd—  
None could discern in hers a troubled breast.

Her wounded soldier is a prisoner made,  
She hears, prepares, and is at once convey'd  
Through hostile ranks:—with air sedate she goes,  
And makes admiring friends of wondering foes.

Her dying husband to her care confides  
Affairs perplex'd; she reasons, she decides;  
If intricate her way, her walk discretion  
guides.

Home to her country she returns alone,  
Her health decay'd, her child, her husband,  
gone;

There she in peace reposes, there resumes  
Her female duties, and in rest re-blooms;

She is not one at common ills to droop,  
Nor to vain murmuring will her spirit stoop.

I leave her thus : her fortieth year is nigh,  
She will not for another captain sigh ;  
Will not a young and gay lieutenant take,  
Because 'tis pretty to reform a rake ;  
Yet she again may plight her widow'd hand,  
Should love invite, or charity demand ;  
And make her days, although for duty's sake,  
As sad as folly and mischance can make.

## II

*P.* LIVES yet the WIDOW, whose firm  
spirit bore  
Ills unrepining ?—

*F.* Here she lives no more,  
But where—I speak with some good people's  
leave—

Where all good works their due reward re-  
ceive ;

Though what reward to our best works is due  
I leave to them,—and will my tale pursue.

Again she married, to her husband's friend  
Whose wife was hers, whom going to attend,  
As on her death-bed she, yet young, was laid,  
The anxious parent took her hand and said,  
' Prove now your love ; let these poor infants  
be

As thine, and find a mother's love in thee !'  
' And must I woo their father ? '—' Nay,  
indeed ;

He no encouragement but hope will need ;  
In hope too let me die, and think my wish  
decreed.'

The wife expires ; the widow'd pair unite ;  
Their love was sober, and their prospect  
bright.

She train'd the children with a studious love,  
That knew full well t' encourage and reprove ;  
Nicely she dealt her praise and her disgrace,  
Not harsh and not indulgent out of place,  
Not to the forward partial—to the slow  
All patient, waiting for the time to sow  
The seeds that, suited to the soil, would grow.

Nor watch'd she less the Husband's weaker  
soul,

But learn'd to lead him who abhorr'd control,  
Who thought a nursery, next a kitchen, best  
To women suited, and she acquiesced ;  
She only begg'd to rule in small affairs,  
And ease her wedded lord of common cares,  
Till he at length thought every care was small,  
Beneath his notice, and she had them all.

He on his throne the lawful monarch sate,  
And she was by—the minister of state :  
He gave assent, and he required no more,  
But sign'd the act that she decreed before.

Again, her fates in other work decree  
A mind so active should experienced be.

One of the name, who roved the world  
around,

At length had something of its treasures found,  
And childless died, amid his goods and gain,  
In far Barbadoes on the western main.

His kinsman heard, and wish'd the wealth to  
share,

But had no mind to be transported there :—  
' His Wife could sail—her courage who could  
doubt ?—

And she was not tormented with the gout.'  
She liked it not ; but for his children's  
sake,

And for their father's, would the duty  
take.

Storms she encounter'd, ere she reach'd the  
shore,

And other storms when these were heard no  
more,—

The rage of lawyers forced to drop their  
prey,—

And once again to England made her way.

She found her Husband with his gout  
removed,

And a young nurse, most skilful and ap-  
proved ;

Whom—for he yet was weak—he urged to  
stay,

And nurse him while his consort was away :—

' She was so handy, so discreet, so nice,  
As kind as comfort, though as cold as ice !

Else,' he assured his lady, ' in no case,  
So young a creature should have fill'd the  
place.'

It has been held—indeed, the point is clear,  
' None are so deaf as those who will not hear.'

And, by the same good logic, we shall find,  
' As those who will not see, are none so blind.'

The thankful Wife repaid th' attention shown,  
But now would make the duty all her own.

Again the gout return'd ; but seizing now  
A vital part, would no relief allow,

The Husband died, but left a will that  
proved

He much respected whom he coolly loved.  
All power was hers ; nor yet was such her age,  
But rivals strove her favour to engage :

They talk'd of love with so much warmth and  
zeal,  
That they believed the woman's heart must  
feel ;

Adding such praises of her worth beside,  
As vanquish prudence oft by help of pride.

In vain ! her heart was by discretion led—  
She to the children of her Friend was wed ;  
These she establish'd in the world, and died,  
In peace and hope, serene and satisfied.

And loves not man that woman Who can  
charm

Life's grievous ills, and grief itself disarm ?—  
Who in his fears and troubles brings him aid,  
And seldom is, and never seems, afraid ?

No ! ask of man the fair one whom he loves,  
You'll find her one of the desponding doves,  
Who tender troubles as her portion brings,  
And with them fondly to a husband clings—  
Who never moves abroad, nor sits at home,  
Without distress, past, present, or to come—  
Who never walks the unfrequented street,  
Without a dread that death and she shall  
meet :

On land, on water, she must guarded be,  
Who sees the danger none besides her see,  
And is determined by her cries to call  
All men around her : she will have them all.

Man loves to think the tender being lives  
But by the power that his protection gives :

He loves the feeble step, the plaintive tone,  
And flies to help who cannot stand alone :  
He thinks of propping elms, and claspings  
vines,

And in her weakness thinks her virtue shines ;  
On him not one of her desires is lost,  
And he admires her for this care and cost.

But when afflictions come, when beauty  
dies,

Or sorrows vex the heart, or danger tries—  
When time of trouble brings the daily care,  
And gives of pain as much as he can bear—

'Tis then he wants, if not the helping hand,  
At least a soothing temper, meek and bland—  
He wants the heart that shares in his distress,  
At least the kindness that would make it less ;

And when instead he hears th' eternal grief  
For some light want, and not for his relief—  
And when he hears the tender trembler sigh,  
For some indulgence he can not supply—

When, in the midst of many a care, his ' dear,'  
Would like a duchess at a ball appear—  
And, while he feels a weight that wears him  
down,

Would see the prettiest sight in all the town,—  
Love then departs, and if some Pity lives,  
That Pity half despises, half forgives,

'Tis join'd with grief, is not from shame  
exempt,  
And has a plenteous mixture of contempt.

## TALE XV. BELINDA WATERS

### I

OF all the beauties in our favour'd place,  
BELINDA WATERS was the pride and grace.

Say ye who sagely can our fortunes read,  
Shall this fair damsel in the world succeed ?

A rosy beauty she, and fresh and fair,  
Who never felt a caution or a care ;

Gentle by nature, ever fond of ease,  
And more consenting than inclined to please.

A tame good nature in her spirit lives—  
She hates refusal for the pain it gives :

From opposition arguments arise,  
And to prevent the trouble, she complies.

She, if in Scotland, would be *fash'd* all day,  
If call'd to any work or any play ;

She lets no busy, idle wish intrude,  
But is by nature negatively good.

In marriage hers will be a dubious fate :

She is not fitted for a high estate ;—

There wants the grace, the polish, and the  
pride ;

Less is she fitted for a humble bride :

Whom fair Belinda weds—let chance decide !

She sees her father oft engross'd by  
cares,

And therefore hates to hear of men's affairs :

An active mother in the household reigns,

And spares Belinda all domestic pains.

Of food she knows but this, that we are fed :—

Though, duly taught, she prays for daily  
bread,

Yet whence it comes, of hers is no concern—  
It comes ! and more she never wants to learn.

She on the table sees the common fare,

But how provided is beneath her care.

Lovely and useless, she has no concern  
About the things that aunts and mothers  
learn ;

But thinks, when married,—if she thinks at  
all,—

That what she needs will answer to her call.

To write is business, and, though taught to  
write,

She keeps the pen and paper out of sight :

What once was painful she cannot allow

To be enjoyment or amusement now.

She wonders why the ladies are so fond

Of such long letters, when they correspond.

Crowded and cross'd by ink of different stain,

She thinks to read them would confuse her  
brain ;

Nor much mistakes ; but still has no pretence  
To praise for this, her critic's indolence.

Behold her now ! she on her sofa looks

O'er half a shelf of circulating books.

This she admired, but she forgets the name,  
And reads again another, or the same.

She likes to read of strange and bold escapes,

Of plans and plottings, murders and mishaps,

Love in all hearts, and lovers in all shapes.

She sighs for pity, and her sorrows flow

From the dark eyelash on the page below ;

And is so glad when, all the misery past,

The dear adventurous lovers meet at last—

Meet and are happy ; and she thinks it  
hard,

When thus an author might a pair reward—

When they, the troubles all dispersed, might  
wed—

He makes them part, and die of grief instead !

Yet tales of terror are her dear delight,

All in the wintry storm to read at night ;

And to her maid she turns in all her doubt,—

' This shall I like ? and what is that about ? '

She had ' Clarissa ' for her heart's dear  
friend—

Was pleased each well-tried virtue to com-  
mend,

And praised the scenes that one might fairly  
doubt,

If one so young could know so much about :

Pious and pure, th' heroic beauty strove

Against the lover and against the love ;

But strange that maid so young should know  
the strife,

In all its views, was painted to the life !

Belinda knew not—nor a tale would read,

That could so slowly on its way proceed ;

And ere Clarissa reach'd the wicked town,  
The weary damsel threw the volume down.

' Give me,' she said, ' for I would laugh or  
cry,

" Scenes from the Life," and " Sensibility ; "

" Winters at Bath,"—I would that I had one !

" The Constant Lover," the " Discarded Son,"

" The Rose of Raby," " Delmore," or " The  
Nun."

These promise something, and may please,  
perhaps,

Like " Ethelinda," and the dear " Relapse." '

To these her heart the gentle maid resign'd,

And such the food that fed the gentle mind.

## II

P. KNEW you the fair BELINDA, once the  
boast

Of a vain mother, and a favourite toast

Of clerks and young lieutenants, a gay set

Of light admirers ?—Is she married yet ?

F. Yes ! she is married ; though she  
waited long,

Not from a prudent fear of choosing wrong,  
But want of choice.—She took a surgeon's

mate,

With his half pay, that was his whole estate.

Fled is the charming bloom that nature  
spread

Upon her cheek, the pure, the rosy red—

This, and the look serene, the calm, kind look,  
are fled.

Sorrow and sadness now the place possess,

And the pale cast of anxious fretfulness.

She wonders much—as, why they live so  
ill,—

Why the rude butcher brings his weekly  
bill,—

She wonders why that baker will not trust,—  
And says, most truly says,—' Indeed, he  
must.'

She wonders where her former friends are  
gone,—

And thus, from day to day, she wonders on.

How'er she can—she dresses gaily yet,

And theft she wonders how they came in debt.

Her husband loves her, and in accent mild,

Answers, and treats her like a fretted child ;

But when he, ruffled, makes severe replies,

And seems unhappy—then she pouts, and  
cries

' She wonders when she'll die ! '—She faints,  
but never dies.

'How well my father lived!' she says.—

'How well,

My dear, your father's creditors could tell!' And then she weeps, till comfort is applied, That soothes her spleen or gratifies her pride: Her dress and novels, visits and success In a chance-game, are soft'ners of distress.

So life goes on!—But who that loved his life,

Would take a fair Belinda for his wife?

Who thinks that all are for their stations born,

Some to indulge themselves, and to adorn;

And some, a useful people, to prepare, Not being rich, good things for those who are,

And who are born, it cannot be denied,

To have their wants and their demands supplied.

She knows that money is a needful thing, That fathers first, and then that husbands bring;

Or if those persons should the aid deny, Daughters and wives have but to faint and die, Till flesh and blood can not endure the pain, And then the lady lives and laughs again.

To wed an ague, and to feel, for life, Hot fits and cold succeeding in a wife; To take the pestilence with poison'd breath, And wed some potent minister of death, Is cruel fate—yet death is then relief; But thus to wed is ever-during grief.

Oft have I heard, how blest the youth who weds

Belinda Waters!—rather he who dreads

That fate—a truth her husband well approves, Who blames and fondles, humours, chides, and loves.

## TALE XVI. THE DEALER AND CLERK

### I

BAD men are seldom cheerful; but we see That, when successful, they can merry be. ONE whom I leave, his darling money lends, On terms well known, to his unhappy friends;

He farms and trades, and in his method treats His guests, whom first he comforts, then he cheats.

HE knows their private griefs, their inward groans,

And then applies his leeches and his loans, To failing, falling families—and gets, I know not how, with large increase, their debts.

He early married, and the woman made A losing bargain; she with scorn was paid For no small fortune. On this slave he vents His peevish slights, his moody discontents. Her he neglects, indulging in her stead, One whom he bribed to leave a husband's bed—

A young fair mother too, the pride and joy Of him whom her desertion will destroy.

The poor man walks by the adulterer's door, To see the wife, whom he must meet no more: She will not look upon the face of one Whom she has blighted, ruined, and undone.

He feels the shame; his heart with grief is rent; Hers is the guilt, and his the punishment.

The cruel spoiler to his need would lend Unsought relief—his need will soon have end: Let a few wintry months in sorrow pass, And on his corse shall grow the vernal grass. Neighbours, indignant, of his griefs partake, And hate the villain for the victim's sake; Wond'ring what bolt within the stores of heaven

Shall on that bold, offending wretch be driven.

Alas! my grieving friends, we cannot know Why Heaven inflicts, and why suspends, the blow.

Meanwhile the godless man, who thus destroys Another's peace, in peace his wealth enjoys, And, every law evaded or defied, Is with long life and prosperous fortune tried: 'How long?' the Prophet cried, and we, 'how long?'

But think how quick that Eye, that Arm how strong, And bear what seems not right, and trust it is not wrong.

Does Heaven forbear? then sinners mercy find—

Do sinners fall? 'tis mercy to mankind.

ADIEU! can one so miserable be, Rich, wretched man! to barter fates with thee?

## II

YET, ere I go, some notice must be paid  
To JOHN, his Clerk, a man full sore afraid  
Of his own frailty—many a troubled day  
Has he walk'd doubtful in some close by-way,  
Beseeching Conscience on her watch to keep,  
Afraid that she one day should fall asleep.

A quiet man was John : his mind was slow ;  
Little he knew, and little sought to know.  
He gave respect to worth, to riches more,  
And had instinctive dread of being poor.  
Humble and careful, diligent and neat,  
He in the Dealer's office found a seat :  
Happy in all things, till a fear began  
To break his rest—He served a wicked man ;  
Who spurn'd the way direct of honest trade,  
But praised the laws his cunning could evade.

This crafty Dealer of religion spoke,  
As if design'd to be the wise man's cloak,  
And the weak man's encumbrance, whom it  
awes,  
And keeps in dread of conscience and the  
laws ;

Yet, for himself, he loved not to appear  
In her grave dress ; 'twas troublesome to  
wear.

This Dealer played at games of skill, and  
won

Sums that surprised the simple mind of John :  
Nor trusted skill alone ; for well he knew,  
What a sharp eye and dextrous hand could do ;  
When, if suspected, he had always by  
The daring oath to back the cunning lie.

John was distress'd, and said, with aching  
heart,

' I from the vile, usurious man must part ;  
For if I go not—yet I mean to go—  
This friend to me will to my soul be foe.  
I serve my master : there is nought to blame ;  
But whom he serves, I tremble but to name.'

From such reflections sprung the painful  
fear,—

' The Foe of Souls is too familiar here :  
My master stands between : so far, so good ;  
But 'tis at best a dangerous neighbourhood.'

Then livelier thoughts began this fear to  
chase,—

' It is a gainful, a convenient place :  
If I should quit—another takes the pen,  
And what a chance for my preferment then ?  
Religion nothing by my going gains ;  
If I depart, my master still remains.

True, I record the deeds that I abhor,  
But these that master has to answer for.  
Then say I leave the office ! his success,  
And his injustice, will not be the less ;  
Nay, would be greater—I am right to stay ;  
It checks him, doubtless, in his fearful way.  
Fain would I stay, and yet be not beguiled ;  
But pitch is near, and man is soon defiled.'

## III

P. SUCH were the MAN and MASTER,—and  
I now

Would know if they together live, and how.  
To such enquiries, thus my Friend re-  
plied :—

F. The Wife was slain—or, say at least, she  
died.

But there are murders, that the human eye  
Cannot detect,—which human laws defy :  
There are the wrongs insulted fondness feels,  
In many a secret wound that never heals ;  
The Savage murders with a single blow ;  
Murders like this are secret and are slow.

Yet, when his victim lay upon her bier,  
There were who witness'd that he dropt a  
tear ;

Nay, more, he praised the woman he had lost,  
And undisputed paid the funeral cost.

The Favourite now, her lord and master  
freed,

Prepared to wed, and be a wife indeed.

The day, 'twas said, was fix'd, the robes were  
bought,

A feast was order'd ; but a cold was caught,  
And pain ensued, with fever—grievous pain,  
With the mind's anguish that disturb'd the  
brain,—

Till nature ceased to struggle, and the mind  
Saw clearly death before, and sin behind.

Priests and physicians gave what they could  
give ;

She turn'd away, and, shuddering, ceased to  
live.

The Dealer now appeared awhile as one  
Lost ; with but little of his race to run,  
And that in sorrow : men with one consent,  
And one kind hope, said, ' Bonner will repent.'  
Alas ! we saw not what his fate would be,  
But this we fear'd,—no penitence had he ;  
Nor time for penitence, nor any time,  
So quick the summons, to look back on crime.

When he the partner of his sin entomb'd,  
He paused awhile, and then the way resumed

Ev'n as before : yet was he not the same ;  
 The tempter once, he now the dupe became.  
 John long had left him, nor did one remain  
 Who would his harlot in her course refrain ;  
 Obsequious, humble, studious of his ease,  
 The present Phoebe only sought to please.  
 ' With one so artless, what,' said he, ' to fear,  
 Or what to doubt, in one who holds me dear ?  
 Friends she may have, but me she will not  
 wrong ;

If weak her judgment, yet her love's strong ;  
 And I am lucky now in age to find  
 A friend so trusty, and a nurse so kind.'

Yet neither party was in peace : the man  
 Had restless nights, and in the morn began  
 To cough and tremble ; he was hot and cold—  
 He had a nervous fever, he was told.  
 His dreams—'twas strange, for none reflected  
 less

On his past life—were frightful to excess ;  
 His favourite dinners were no more enjoy'd,  
 And, in a word, his spirits were destroy'd.

And what of Phoebe ? She her measures  
 plann'd ;

All but his money was at her command :  
 All would be hers when Heav'n her Friend  
 should call ;

But Heav'n was slow, and much she long'd  
 for all :—

' Mine when he dies, mean wretch ! and why  
 not mine,

When it would prove him generous to resign  
 What he enjoys not ? '—Phoebe at command  
 Gave him his brandy with a liberal hand.

A way more quick and safe she did not know,  
 And brandy, though it might be sure, was  
 slow.

But more she dared not ; for she felt a dread  
 Of being tried, and only wish'd him dead.

Such was her restless strife of hope and fear—  
 He might cough on for many a weary year ;  
 Nay, his poor mind was changing, and when  
 ill,

Some foe to her may wicked thoughts instil !  
 Oh ! 'tis a trial sore to watch a Miser's will.  
 Thus, though the pair appear'd in peace to  
 live,

They felt that vice has not that peace to give.  
 There watch'd a cur before the Miser's  
 gate,

A very cur, whom all men seem'd to hate ;  
 Gaunt, savage, shaggy, with an eye that shone  
 Like a live coal, and he possess'd but one ;

His bark was wild and eager, and became  
 That meagre body and that eye of flame ;  
 His master prized him much, and Fang his  
 name.

His master fed him largely ; but not that,  
 Nor aught of kindness, made the snarler fat.  
 Flesh he devour'd, but not a bit would stay ;  
 He bark'd, and snarl'd, and growl'd it all  
 away.

His ribs were seen extended like a rack,  
 And coarse red hair hung roughly o'er his  
 back.

Lamed in one leg, and bruised in wars of yore,  
 Now his sore body made his temper sore.  
 Such was the friend of him, who could not  
 find,

Nor make him one, 'mong creatures of his kind.  
 Brave deeds of Fang his master often told,  
 The son of Fury, famed in days of old,  
 From Snatch and Rabid sprung ; and noted  
 they

In earlier times—each dog will have his day.

The notes of Fang were to his master known,  
 And dear—they bore some likeness to his  
 own ;

For both convey'd to the experienced ear,  
 ' I snarl and bite, because I hate and fear.'  
 None pass'd ungreeted by the master's door,  
 Fang rail'd at all, but chiefly at the poor ;  
 And when the nights were stormy, cold, and  
 dark,

The act of Fang was a perpetual bark ;  
 But though the master loved the growl of  
 Fang,

There were who vow'd the ugly cur to hang ;  
 Whose angry master, watchful for his friend,  
 As strongly vow'd his servant to defend.

In one dark night, and such as Fang before  
 Was ever known its tempests to outroar,  
 To his protector's wonder now express'd  
 No angry notes—his anger was at rest.

The warring master sought the silent yard,  
 Left Phoebe sleeping, and his door unbarr'd ;  
 Nor more returned to that forsaken bed—  
 But lo ! the morning came, and he was dead.

Fang and his master side by side were laid  
 In grim repose—their debt of nature paid !  
 The master's hand upon the cur's cold chest  
 Was now reclined, and had before been  
 press'd,

As if he search'd how deep and wide the  
 wound

That laid such spirit in a sleep so sound ;

And when he found it was the sleep of death,  
A sympathising sorrow stopp'd his breath.  
Close to his trusty servant he was found,  
As cold his body, and his sleep as sound.

We know no more; but who on horrors  
dwell

Of that same night have dreadful things to  
tell:

Of outward force, they say, was not a sign—  
The hand that struck him was the Hand  
Divine;

And then the Fiend, in that same stormy  
night,

Was heard—as many thought—to claim his  
right;

While grinning imps the body danced about,  
And then they vanish'd with triumphant  
shout.

So think the crowd, and well it seems in  
them,

That ev'n their dreams and fancies vice con-  
demn;

That not alone for virtue Reason pleads,  
But Nature shudders at unholy deeds;  
While our strong fancy lists in her defence,  
And takes the side of Truth and Innocence.

#### IV

P. BUT, what the fortune of the MAN,  
whose fear

Inform'd his Conscience that the foe was  
near;

But yet whose interest to his desk confined  
That sober CLERK of indecisive mind?

F. JOHN served his master, with himself at  
strife,

For he with Conscience lived like man and  
wife;

Now jarring, now at peace,—the life they led  
Was all contention, both at board and bed:  
His meals were troubled by his scruples all,  
And in his dreams he was about to fall  
Into some strong temptation—for it seems  
He never could resist it in his dreams.

At length his MASTER, dealer, smuggler,  
cheat,

As John would call him in his temper's heat,  
Proposed a something—what, is dubious  
still—

That John resisted with a stout good-will.  
Scruples like his were treated with disdain,  
Whose waking conscience spurn'd the offer'd  
gain.

'Quit then my office, scoundrel! and be  
gone.'

'I dare not do it,' said the affrighten'd John.  
'What fear'st thou, driveller! can thy fancy  
tell?'

'I doubt,' said John—'I'm sure there is a  
hell.'

'No question, wretch! thy foot is on the  
door;

To be in hell, thou fool! is to be poor:  
Wilt thou consent?'—But John, with many  
a sigh,

Refused, then sank beneath his stronger eye,  
Who with a curse dismiss'd the fool that dared  
Not join a venture which he might have  
shared.

The worthy Clerk then served a man in  
trade,

And was his friend and his companion made—  
A sickly man, who sundry wares retail'd,  
Till, while his trade increased, his spirit fail'd.  
John was to him a treasure, whom he proved,  
And, finding faithful, as a brother loved.  
To John his views and business he consign'd,  
And forward look'd with a contented mind:  
As sickness bore him onward to the grave,  
A charge of all things to his friend he gave.

But neighbours talk'd—'twas idle—of the  
day

When Richard Shale should walk the dark  
highway—

And whisper'd—tattlers!—that the wife  
received

Such hints with anger, but she nothing  
grieved.

These whispers reach'd the man, who weak,  
and ill

In mind and body, had to make his will;  
And though he died in peace, and all resign'd,  
'Twas plain he harbour'd fancies in his mind.  
With jealous foresight, all that he had gain'd  
His widow's was, while widow she remain'd;  
But if another should the dame persuade  
To wed again, farewell the gains of trade:  
For if the widow'd dove could not refrain,  
She must return to poverty again.

The man was buried, and the will was read,  
And censure spared them not, alive or dead!  
At first the Widow and the Clerk, her friend,  
Spent their free days as prudence bade them  
spend.

At the same table they would dine, 'tis true,  
And they would worship in the self-same pew:



Each had the common interest so at heart,  
It would have grieved them terribly to part;  
And as they both were serious and sedate,  
'Twas long before the world began to prate:  
But when it prated,—though without a  
cause,—

It put the pair in mind of breaking laws,  
Led them to reason what it was that gave  
A husband power, when quiet in his grave.  
The marriage contract they had now by  
heart—

'Till death!'—you see, no longer—'do us  
part.'

'Well! death has loosed us from the tie,  
but still

The loosen'd husband makes a binding will:  
Unjust and cruel are the acts of men.'  
Thus they—and then they sigh'd—and then  
—and then,

'Twas snaring souls,' they said; and how  
he dared

They did not know—they wonder'd—and  
were snared.

'It is a marriage, surely! Conscience  
might

Allow an act so very nearly right:  
Was it not witness to our solemn vow,  
As man and wife? it must the act allow.'  
But Conscience, stubborn to the last, replied,  
'It cannot be! I am not satisfied;

'Tis not a marriage: either dare be poor,  
Or dare be virtuous—part, and sin no more.'

Alas! they many a fond evasion made;  
They could relinquish neither love nor trade.  
They went to church, but thinking, fail'd to  
pray;

They felt not ease or comfort at a play:  
If times were good,—'We merit not such  
times,'

If ill,—'Is this the produce of our crimes?'  
When sick—'Tis thus forbidden pleasures  
cease.'

When well—they both demand, 'Had Zimri  
● peace?

For though our worthy master was not slain,  
His injured ghost has reason to complain.'

Ah, John! bethink thee of thy generous  
joy,

When Conscience drove thee from thy late  
employ;

When thou wert poor, and knew not where  
to run,

But then could say 'The will of God be done!'

When thou that will, and not thine own  
obey'd,—

Of Him alone, and not of man afraid:  
Thou then hadst pity on that wretch, and,  
free

Thyself, couldst pray for him who injured  
thee.

Then how alert thy step, thyself how light  
All the day long! thy sleep how sound at  
night!

But now, though plenty on thy board be  
found,

And thou hast credit with thy neighbours  
round,

Yet there is something in thy looks that  
tells,

An odious secret in thy bosom dwells:  
Thy form is not erect, thy neighbours trace  
A coward spirit in thy shifting pace.

Thou goest to meeting, not from any call,  
But just to hear, that we are sinners all,  
And equal sinners, or the difference made  
'Twixt man and man has but the slightest  
shade;

That reformation asks a world of pains,  
And, after all, must leave a thousand stains  
And, worst of all, we must the work begin  
By first attacking the prevailing sin!—

These thoughts the feeble mind of John  
assail,

And o'er his reason and his fears prevail:  
They fill his mind with hopes of gifts and grace,  
Faith, feelings!—something that supplies the  
place

Of true conversion—this will he embrace;  
For John perceives that he was scarcely tried  
By the first conquest, that increased his pride,  
When he refused his master's crime to aid,  
And by his self-applause was amply paid;  
But now he feels the difference—feels it hard  
Against his will and favourite wish to guard:  
He mourns his weakness, hopes he shall  
prevail

Against his frailty, and yet still is frail.

Such is his life! and such the life must be  
Of all who will be bound, yet would be free;  
Who would unite what God to part decrees—  
The offended conscience, and the mind at  
ease;

Who think, but vainly think, to sin and pray,  
And God and Mammon in their turn obey.  
Such is his life!—and so I would not live  
For all that wealthy widows have to give.

## TALE XVII. DANVERS AND RAYNER

## I

THE purest Friendship, like the finest ware,  
Deserves our praises, but demands our care.  
For admiration we the things produce,  
But they are not design'd for common use ;  
Flaws the most trifling from their virtue take,  
And lamentation for their loss we make :  
While common Friendships, like the wares of  
clay,  
Are a cheap kind, but useful every day :  
Though crack'd and damaged, still we make  
them do,  
And when they're broken, they're forgotten  
too.

There is within the world in which we dwell  
A Friendship, answering to that world full  
well ;

An interchange of looks and actions kind,  
And, in some sense, an intercourse of mind ;  
A useful commerce, a convenient trade,  
By which both parties are the happier made ;  
And, when the thing is rightly understood,  
And justly valued, it is wise and good.

I speak not here of Friendships that excite  
In boys at school such wonder and delight,—  
Of high heroic Friends, in serious strife,  
Contending which should yield a forfeit life—  
Such wondrous love, in their maturer days,  
Men, if they credit, are content to praise.

I speak not here of Friendships true and  
just,  
When friend can friend with life and honour  
trust ;

Where mind to mind has long familiar grown,  
And every failing, every virtue known :  
Of these I speak not : things so rich and rare,  
That we degrade with jewels to compare,  
Or bullion pure and massy.—I intend  
To treat of one whose Neighbour called him  
Friend,

Or called him Neighbour ; and with reason  
good—

The friendship rising from the neighbourhood :  
A sober kind, in common service known ;  
Not such as is in death and peril shown :  
Such as will give or ask a helping hand,  
But no important sacrifice demand ;

In fact, a friendship that will long abide,  
If seldom rashly, never strongly, tried.  
Yes ! these are sober friendships, made for  
use,

And much convenience they in life produce :  
Like a good coat, that keeps us from the  
cold,

The cloth of frieze is not a cloth of gold ;  
But neither is it pyebald, pieced, and poor ;  
'Tis a good useful coat, and nothing more.

Such is the Friendship of the world ap-  
proved,  
And here the Friends so loving and so  
loved :—

DANVERS and RAYNER, equals, who had made  
Each decent fortune, both were yet in trade ;  
While sons and daughters, with a youthful  
zeal,

Seem'd the hereditary love to feel :  
And ev'n their wives, though either might  
pretend

To claim some notice, call'd each other friend.  
While yet their offspring boys and girls  
appear'd,

The fathers ask'd, 'What evil could be  
fear'd ?'

Nor is it easy to assign the year,  
When cautious parents should begin to fear.  
The boys must leave their schools, and, by  
and by,

The girls are sure to grow reserved and shy ;  
And then, suppose a real love should rise,  
It but unites the equal families.

Love does not always from such freedom  
spring ;  
Distrust, perhaps, would sooner cause the  
thing.

'We will not check it, neither will we force'—  
Thus said the fathers—'Let it take its course.'

It took its course:—young Richard Danvers'  
mind

In Phoebe Rayner found what lovers find—  
Sense, beauty, sweetness ; all that mortal  
eyes

Can see, or heart conceive, or thought devise.  
And Phoebe's eye, and thought, and heart  
could trace

In Richard Danvers every manly grace—

All that e'er maiden wish'd, or matron  
prized—

So well these good young people sympathised.

All their relations, neighbours, and allies,  
All their dependants, visitors, and spies,  
Such as a wealthy family caress,  
Said here was love, and drank to love's  
success.

'Tis thus I leave the parties, young and old,  
Lovers and Friends. Will Love and Friend-  
ship hold ?

Will Prudence with the children's wish  
comply,

And Friendship strengthen with that new  
ally ?

## II

P. I SEE no more within our borough's  
bound

The name of DANVERS ! Is it to be found ?  
Were the young pair in Hymen's fetters tied,  
Or did succeeding years the Friends divide ?

F. Nay ! take the story, as by time brought  
forth,

And of such Love and Friendship judge the  
worth.

While the lad's love—his parents call'd it so—  
Was going on, as well as love could go,  
A wealthy Danvers, in a distant place,  
Left a large fortune to this favour'd race.

To that same place the father quickly went,  
And Richard only murmur'd weak dissent.

Of Richard's heart the parent truly  
guess'd :—

' Well, my good lad ! then do what suits thee  
best ;

No doubt thy brothers will do all they can  
T' obey the orders of the good old man :

Well, I would not thy free-born spirit bind ;  
Take, Dick, the way to which thou'rt most  
inclined.'

No answer gave the youth ; nor did he  
swear

The old man's riches were beneath his care ;  
Nor that he would with his dear Phoebe stay,  
And let his heartless father move away.

No ! kind and constant, tender, faithful,  
fond,—

Thus far he'd go—but not one step beyond !  
Not disobedient to a parent's will—  
A lover constant—but dependent still.

Letters, at first, between the constant swain  
And the kind damsel banish'd all their pain :

Both full and quick they were ; for lovers  
write

With vast despatch, and read with vast  
delight—

So quick they were,—for Love is never  
slow,—

So full, they ever seem'd to overflow.

Their hearts are ever fill'd with grief or joy,  
And these to paint is every hour's employ :  
Joy they would not retain ; and for their  
grief,

To read such letters is a sure relief.

But, in due time, both joy and grief  
suppress,

They found their comfort in a little rest.

Mails went and came without the accustom'd  
freight,

For Love grew patient, and content, to wait—  
Yet was not dead, nor yet afraid to die ;  
For though he wrote not, Richard wonder'd  
why.

He could not justly tell how letters pass'd,  
But, as to him appear'd, he wrote the last :  
In this he meant not to accuse the maid—  
Love, in some cases, ceases to upbraid.

Yet not indifferent was our Lover grown,  
Although the ardour of the flame was flown ;  
He still of Phoebe thought, her lip, her  
smile—

But grew contented with his fate the while.

Thus, not inconstant were the youthful pair—  
The Lad remembered still the Lass was fair ;  
And Phoebe still, with half-affected sigh,  
Thought it a pity that such love should die ;  
And had they then, with this persuasion,  
met,

Love had rekindled, and been glowing yet.

But times were changed : no mention now  
was made

By the old Squire, or by the young, of trade.  
The worthy Lady, and her children all,  
Had due respect—The People at the Hall.  
His Worship now read Burn, and talk'd with  
skill

About the poor-house, and the turnpike-bill ;  
Lord of a manor, he had serious claims,  
And knew the poaching rascals by their  
names :

And if the father thus improved his mind,  
Be sure the children were not far behind :  
To rank and riches what respect was due,  
To them and theirs what deference, well they  
knew ;

And, from the greatest to the least, could show

What to the favouring few the favour'd many owe.

The mind of man must have whereon to work,

Or it will rust—we see it in the Turk ;

And Justice Danvers, though he read the news,

And all of law that magistrates peruse,—

Bills about roads and charities,—yet still

Wanted employ his vacant mind to fill ;

These were not like the shipping, once his pride,

Now, with his blue surtout, laid all aside.

No doubt, his spirits in their ebb to raise,  
He found some help in men's respect and praise—

Praise of his house, his land, his lawn, his trees—

He cared not what—to praise him was to please :

Yet though his rural neighbours called to dine,  
And some might kindly praise his food and wine,

This was not certain, and another day,

He must the visit and the praise repay.

By better motives urged—we will suppose—  
He thus began his purpose to disclose

To his good lady :—‘ We have lived a year,  
And never ask'd our friends the Rayners here :

Do let us ask them—as for Richard's flame,  
It went, we see, as idly as it came—

Invite them kindly—here's a power of room,  
And the poor people will be glad to come.

Outside and in, the coach will hold them all,

And set them down beside the garden wall.’

The Lady wrote, for that was all he meant,  
Kind soul ! by asking for his wife's assent :

And every Rayner was besought to come  
To dine in Hulver Hall's grand dining-room.

About this time old Rayner, who had lost  
His Friend's advice, was by misfortune cross'd :

Some debtors fail'd, when large amounts were due,

So large, that he was nearly failing too ;

But he, grown wary, that he might not fail,  
Brought to in adverse gales, and shorten'd sail :

This done, he rested, and could now attend  
The invitation of his distant Friend.

‘ Well ! he would go ; but not, indeed,  
t' admire

The state and grandeur of the new-made Squire ;

Danvers, belike, now wealthy, might impart  
Some of his gold ; for Danvers had a heart,

And may have heard, though guarded so around,

That I have lost the fortune he has found :

Yes ! Dick is kind, or he and his fine seat  
Might go to—where we never more should meet.’

Now, lo ! the Rayners all at Hulver Place,—  
Or Hulver Hall—'tis not a certain case ;

'Tis only known that Ladies' notes were sent

Directed both ways, and they always went.

We pass the greetings, and the dinner pass,  
All the male gossip o'er the sparkling glass,  
And female when retired :—The Squire invites

His Friend, by sleep refresh'd, to see his sights—

His land and lions, granary, barns, and crops,  
His dairy, piggery, pinery, apples, hops ;—  
But here a hill appears, and Peter Rayner stops.

‘ Ah ! my old Friend, I give you joy,’ he cries :

‘ But some are born to fall, and some to rise ;  
You're better many a thousand, I the worse—

Dick, there's no dealing with a failing purse ;  
Nor does it shame me (mine is all mischance)

To wish some friendly neighbour would advance’—

—But here the guest on such a theme was low.

His host, meantime, intent upon the show,  
In hearing heard not—they came out to see,—

And pushing forward—‘ There's a view,’ quoth he ;

‘ Observe that ruin, built, you see, to catch  
The gazer's eye ; that cottage with the thatch—

It cost me—guess you what ?’—that sound of cost

Was accidental, but it was not lost.

‘ Ah ! my good Friend, be sure such things  
as these

Suit well enough a man who lives at ease :

Think what “ The Betsy ” cost, and think the shock

Of losing her upon the Dodder-Rock :

The tidings reach'd me on the very day  
That villain robb'd us, and then ran away.  
Loss upon loss ! now if——

‘Do stay a bit ;’

Exclaim'd the Squire, ‘these matters hardly fit  
A morning ramble—let me show you now  
My team of oxen, and my patent plough.  
Talk of your horses ! I the plan condemn—  
They eat us up—but oxen ! we eat them ;  
For first they plough and bring us bread to eat,  
And then we fat and kill them—there's the  
meat.

What's your opinion ?’—

—‘I am poorly fed,

And much afraid to want both meat and  
bread,’

Said Rayner, half indignant ; and the Squire  
Sigh'd, as he felt he must no more require  
A man, whose prospects fail'd, his prospects  
to admire.

Homeward they moved, and met a gentle  
pair,

The poor man's daughter, and the rich man's  
heir :

This caused some thought ; but on the couple  
went,

And a soft hour in tender converse spent.

This pair, in fact, their passion roused anew,  
Alone much comfort from the visit drew.

At home the Ladies were engaged, and all  
Show'd or were shown the wonders of the Hall ;  
From room to room the weary guests went on,  
Till every Rayner wish'd the show was done.

Home they return'd : the Father deeply  
sigh'd

To find he vainly had for aid applied :

It hurt him much to ask—and more to be  
denied.

The younger Richard, who alone sustain'd  
The dying Friendship, true to Love remain'd :  
His Phoebe's smiles, although he did not yet  
Fly to behold, he could not long forget ;  
Nor durst he visit, nor was love so strong,  
That he could more than think his Father  
wrong ;

For, wrong or right, that father still profess'd  
The most obedient son should fare the best.

So time pass'd on ; the second spring  
appear'd,

Ere Richard ventured on the deed he fear'd :—  
He dared at length ; and not so much for  
love,

I grieve to add, but that he meant to prove

He had a will :—His father, in reply,  
This known, had answer'd, ‘So, my son,  
have I.’

But Richard's courage was by prudence  
taught,

And he his nymph in secret service sought.

Some days of absence—not with full consent,  
But with slow leave—were to entreaty lent ;  
And forth the Lover rode, uncertain what he  
meant.

He reached the dwelling he had known so  
long,

When a pert damsel told him, ‘he was wrong ;  
Their house she did not just precisely know,  
But he would find it somewhere in the Row ;  
The Rayners now were come a little down,  
Nor more the topmost people in the town ;’  
She might have added, they their life enjoy'd,  
Although on things less hazardous employ'd.

This was not much ; but yet the damsel's  
sneer,

And the Row-dwelling of a lass so dear,  
Were somewhat startling. He had heard,  
indeed,

That Rayner's business did not well succeed :  
‘But what of that ? They lived in decent  
style,

No doubt, and Phoebe still retain'd her smile ;  
And why,’ he asked, ‘should all men choose  
to dwell

In broad cold streets ?—the Row does just  
as well,

Quiet and snug ;’ and then the favourite  
maid

Rose in his fancy, tastefully array'd,  
Looking with grateful joy upon the swain,  
Who could his love in trying times retain.

Soothed by such thoughts, to the new house  
he came,

Surveyed its aspect, sigh'd, and gave his  
name.

But ere they opened, he had waited long,  
And heard a movement—Was there some-  
what wrong ?

Nay, but a friendly party, he was told ;  
And look'd around, as wishing to behold  
Some friends—but these were not the friends  
of old.

Old Peter Rayner, in his own old mode,  
Bade the Squire welcome to his new abode,  
For Richard had been kind, and doubtless  
meant

To make proposals now, and ask consent.

Mamma and misses, too, were civil all;  
But what their awkward courtesy to call,  
He knew not; neither could he well express  
His sad sensations at their strange address.  
And then their laughter loud, their story-

telling,  
All seem'd befitting to that Row and dwelling;  
The hearty welcome to the various treat  
Was lost on him—he could nor laugh nor eat.

But one thing pleased him, when he look'd  
around,

His dearest Phoebe could not there be found :  
' Wise and discreet,' he says, ' she shuns the  
crew

Of vulgar neighbours, some kind act to do ;  
In some fair house, some female friend to meet,  
Or take at evening prayer in church her seat.'

Meantime there rose, amid the ceaseless din,  
A mingled scent, that crowded room within,  
Rum and red-herring, Cheshire cheese and  
gin ;

Pipes, too, and punch, and sausages, with tea,  
Were things that Richard was disturb'd to  
see.

Impatient now, he left them in disdain,  
To call on Phoebe, when he call'd again ;  
To walk with her, the morning fair and bright,  
And lose the painful feelings of the night.

All in the Row, and tripping at the side  
Of a young Sailor, he the nymph espied,  
As homeward hastening with her happy boy,  
She went to join the party, and enjoy.  
' Fie !' Phoebe cried, as her companion spoke,  
Yet laugh'd to hear the fie-compelling joke ;—  
Just then her chance to meet, her shame to  
know,

Her tender Richard, moving sad and slow,

Musing on things full strange, the manners of  
the Row.

At first amazed, and then alarm'd, the fair  
Late-laughing maid now stood in dumb  
despair :

As when a debtor meets in human shape  
The foe of debtors, and cannot escape,  
He stands in terror, nor can longer aim  
To keep his credit, or preserve his name,  
Stood Phoebe fix'd ! ' Unlucky time and  
place !

An earlier hour had kept me from disgrace !'  
She thought—but now the sailor, undismay'd,  
Said, ' My dear Phoebe, why are you afraid ?  
The man seems civil, or he soon should prove  
That I can well defend the girl I love.  
Are you not mine ?' She utter'd no reply :—  
' Thine I must be,' she thought ; ' more  
foolish I !'

While Richard at the scene stood mute and  
wondering by.

His spirits hurried, but his bosom light,  
He left his Phoebe with a calm ' good night.'  
So Love like Friendship fell ! The youth  
awhile

Dreamt, sorely moved, of Phoebe's witching  
smile—

But learned in daylight visions to forego,  
The Sailor's laughing Lass, the Phoebe of the  
Row.

Home turn'd young Richard, in due time  
to turn,

With all old Richard's zeal, the leaves of  
Burn ;

And home turned Phoebe—in due time to  
grace

A tottering cabin with a tattered race.

## TALE XVIII. THE BOAT RACE

### I

THE man who dwells where party-spirit  
reigns,

May feel its triumphs, but must wear its chains ;  
He must the friends and foes of party take  
For his, and suffer for his honour's sake ;  
When once enlisted upon either side,  
He must the rude septennial storm abide—  
A storm that when its utmost rage is gone,  
In cold and angry mutterings murmurs on :

A slow unbending scorn, a cold disdain,  
Till years bring the full tempest back again.

Within our Borough two stiff sailors dwelt,  
Who both ~~the~~ party storm and triumph felt ;  
Men who had talents, and were both design'd  
For better things, but anger made them blind.

In the same year they married, and their wives  
Had pass'd in friendship their yet peaceful  
lives,

And, as they married in a time of peace,  
Had no suspicion that their love must cease.

In fact it did not ; but they met by stealth,  
And that perhaps might keep their love in  
health ;

Like children watch'd, desirous yet afraid,  
Their visits all were with discretion paid.

One Captain, so by courtesy we call  
Our hoy's commanders—they are captains  
all—

Had sons and daughters many ; while but one  
The rival Captain bless'd—a darling son.  
Each was a burgess to his party tied,  
And each was fix'd, but on a different side ;  
And he who sought his son's pure mind to fill  
With wholesome food, would evil too instil.  
The last in part succeeded—but in part—  
For Charles had sense, had virtue, had a  
heart ;

And he had soon the cause of Nature tried  
With the stern father, but this father died ;  
Who on his death-bed thus his son ad-  
dress'd :—

'Swear to me, Charles, and let my spirit rest—  
Swear to our party to be ever true,  
And let me die in peace—I pray thee, do.'

With some reluctance, but obedience more,  
The weeping youth reflected, sigh'd, and  
swore ;

Trembling, he swore for ever to be true,  
And wear no colour but the untainted Blue:  
This done, the Captain died in so much joy,  
As if he'd wrought salvation for his boy.

The female friends their wishes yet retain'd,  
But seldom met, by female fears restrain'd ;  
Yet in such town, where girls and boys must  
meet,

And every house is known in every street,  
Charles had before, nay since his father's  
death,

Met, say by chance, the young Elizabeth ;  
Who was both good and graceful, and in truth  
Was but too pleasing to th' observing youth ;  
And why I know not, but the youth to her  
Seem'd just that being that she could prefer.  
Both were disposed to think that party-strife  
Destroy'd the happiest intercourse of life ;  
Charles, too, his growing passion could  
defend—

His father's foe he call'd his mother's friend.  
Mothers, indeed, he knew were ever kind ;  
But in the Captain should he favour find ?  
He doubted this—yet could he that command  
Which fathers love, and few its power with-  
stand.

The mothers both agreed their joint request  
Should to the Captain jointly be address'd ;  
And first the lover should his heart assail,  
And then the ladies, and if all should fail,  
They'd singly watch the hour, and jointly  
might prevail.

The Captain's heart, although unused to  
melt,

A strong impression from persuasion felt ;  
His pride was soften'd by the prayers he  
heard,

And then advantage in the match appear'd.

At length he answer'd,—' Let the lad enlist  
In our good cause, and I no more resist ;  
For I have sworn, and to my oath am true,  
To hate that colour, that rebellious Blue.  
His father once, ere master of the brig,  
For that advantage turn'd a rascal Whig :  
Now let the son—a wife's a better thing—  
A Tory turn, and say, God save the King !  
For I am pledged to serve that sacred cause,  
And love my country, while I keep her laws.'

The women trembled ; for they knew full  
well

The fact they dare not to the Captain tell ;  
And the poor youth declared, with tears and  
sighs,

' My oath was pass'd : I dare not com-  
promise.'

But Charles to reason made his strong  
appeal,

And to the heart—he bade him think and feel:  
The Captain answering, with reply as strong—  
' If you be right, then how can I be wrong ?  
You to your father swore to take his part ;  
I to oppose it ever, head and heart ;  
You to a parent made your oath, and I  
To God ! and can I to my Maker lie ?  
Much, my dear lad, I for your sake would do,  
But I have sworn, and to my oath am true.'

Thus stood the parties when my fortunes  
bore

Me far away from this my native shore :  
And how prevail'd, I know not—Young or  
Old ;

But, I beseech you, let the tale be told.

## II

P. How fared these lovers ? Many a time  
I thought  
How with their ill-starr'd passion Time had  
wrought.

Did either party from his oath recede,  
Or were they never from the bondage freed ?

F. Alas ! replied my Friend—the tale I tell  
With some reluctance, nor can do it well.  
There are three females in the place, and they,  
Like skilful painters, could the facts portray,  
In their strong colours—all that I can do  
Is to present a weak imperfect view ;  
The colours I must leave—the outlines shall  
be true.

Soon did each party see the other's mind,  
What bound them both, and what was like to  
bind ;

Oaths deeply taken in such time and place,  
To break them now was dreadful—was  
disgrace !

‘ That oath a dying father bade me take,  
Can I—yourself a father—can I break ? ’

‘ That oath which I a living sinner took,  
Shall I make void, and yet for mercy look ? ’

The women wept ; the men, themselves  
distress'd,

The cruel rage of party zeal confess'd :  
But solemn oaths, though sprung from party  
zeal,

Feel them we must, as Christians ought to feel.

Yet shall a youth so good, a girl so fair,  
From their obedience only draw despair ?  
Must they be parted ? Is there not a way  
For them both love and duty to obey ?  
Strongly they hoped ; and by their friends  
around

A way, at least a lover's way, was found.

‘ Give up your vote ; you'll then no longer  
be

Free in one sense, but in the better free.’  
Such was of reasoning friends the kind  
advice,

And how could lovers in such case be nice ?  
A man may swear to walk directly on  
While sight remains ; but how if sight be  
gone ?

‘ Oaths are not binding when the party's  
dead ;

Or when the power to keep the oath is fled :  
If I've no vote, I've neither friend nor foe,  
Nor can be said on either side to go.’

They were no casuists :—‘ Well ! ’ the  
Captain cried,

‘ Give up your vote, man, and behold your  
bride ! ’

Thus was it fix'd, and fix'd the day for both  
To take the vow, and set aside the oath.

It gave some pain, but all agreed to say,  
‘ You're now absolved, and have no other  
way :

‘Tis not expected you should love resign  
For man's commands, for love's are all divine.’

When all is quiet and the mind at rest,  
All in the calm of innocence are blest ;  
But when some scruple mixes with our joy,  
We love to give the anxious mind employ.

In autumn late, when evening suns were  
bright,

The day was fix'd the lovers to unite ;  
But one before the eager Captain chose  
To break, with jocund act, his girl's repose,  
And, sailor-like, said, ‘ Hear how I intend  
One day, before the day of days, to spend !  
All round the quay, and by the river's side,  
Shall be a scene of glory for the bride.

We'll have a RACE, and colours will devise  
For every boat, for every man a prize :  
But that which first returns shall bear away  
The proudest pendant—Let us name the day.’

They named the day, and never morn more  
bright

Rose on the river, nor so proud a sight :  
Or if too calm appear'd the cloudless skies,  
Experienced seamen said the wind would rise.  
To that full quay from this then vacant place  
Thronged a vast crowd to see the promised  
Race.

Mid boats new painted, all with streamers fair,  
That flagg'd or flutter'd in that quiet air—  
The Captain's boat that was so gay and trim,  
That made his pride, and seem'd as proud of  
him—

Her, in her beauty, we might all discern,  
Her rigging new, and painted on the stern,  
As one who could not in the contest fail,  
‘ Learn of the little *Nautilus* to sail.’

So forth they started at the signal gun,  
And down the river had three leagues to run ;  
This sail'd, they then their watery way  
retrace,

And the first landed conquers in the race.  
The crowd await till they no more discern,  
Then parting say, ‘ At evening we return.’

I could proceed, but you will guess the fate,  
And but too well my tale anticipate.

P. True ! yet proceed—

F. The lovers had some grief  
In this day's parting, but the time was brief ;  
And the poor girl, between his smiles and sighs,  
Ask'd, ‘ Do you wish to gain so poor a prize ? ’



'But that your father wishes,' he replied,  
'I would the honour had been still denied :  
It makes me gloomy, though I would be gay,  
And oh ! it seems an everlasting day.'  
So thought the lass, and as she said, farewell !  
Soft sighs arose, and tears unbidden fell.

The morn was calm, and ev'n till noon the  
strong  
Unruffled flood moved quietly along ;  
In the dead calm the billows softly fell,  
And mock'd the whistling sea-boy's favourite  
spell :

So rests at noon the reaper, but to rise  
With mightier force and twofold energies.  
The deep, broad stream moved softly, all was  
hush'd,  
When o'er the flood the breeze awakening  
brush'd ;

A sullen sound was heard along the deep,  
The stormy spirit rousing from his sleep ;  
The porpoise rolling on the troubled wave,  
Unwieldy tokens of his pleasure gave ;  
Dark, chilling clouds the troubled deep  
deform,

And led by terror downward rush'd the storm.  
As evening came, along the river's side,  
Or on the quay, impatient crowds divide,  
And then collect ; some whispering, as afraid  
Of what they saw, and more of what they  
said,

And yet must speak : how sudden and how  
great  
The danger seem'd, and what might be the  
fate

Of men so toss'd about in craft so small,  
Lost in the dark, and subject to the squall.  
Then sounds are so appalling in the night,  
And, could we see, how terrible the sight ;  
None knew the evils that they all suspect,  
And Hope at once they covet and reject.

But where the wife, her friend, her daughter,  
where ?

Alas ! in grief, in terror, in despair—  
At home, abroad, upon the quay. No rest  
In any place, but where they are not, best.  
Fearful they ask, but dread the sad reply,  
And many a sailor tells the friendly lie—  
'There is no danger—that is, we believe,  
And think—and hope'—but this does not  
deceive,

Although it soothes them ; while they look  
around,  
Trembling at every sight and every sound.

Let me not dwell on terrors—It is dark,  
And lights are carried to and fro, and hark !  
There is a cry—'a boat, a boat at hand !'  
What a still terror is there now on land !  
'Whose, whose ?' they all enquire, and none  
can understand.

At length they come—and oh ! how then  
rejoice  
A wife and children at that welcome voice :  
It is not theirs—but what have these to tell ?  
'Where did you leave the Captain—were  
they well ?'

Alas ! they know not, they had felt an awe  
In dread of death, and knew not what they  
saw.

Thus they depart.—The evening darker  
grows,  
The lights shake wildly, and as wildly blows  
The stormy night-wind : fear possesses all,  
The hardest hearts, in this sad interval.

But hark again to voices loud and high !  
Once more that hope, that dread, that agony,  
That panting expectation ! 'Oh ! reveal  
What must be known, and think what pangs  
we feel !'

In vain they ask ! The men now landed  
speak

Confused and quick, and to escape them seek.  
Our female party on a sailor press,  
But nothing learn that makes their terror  
less ;

Nothing the man can show, or nothing will  
confess.

To some, indeed, they whisper, bringing news  
For them alone, but others they refuse ;  
And steal away, as if they could not bear  
The griefs they cause, and if they cause must  
share.

They too are gone ! and our unhappy  
Three,

Half wild with fear, are trembling on the quay.  
No ease, no peace, no quiet find,  
The storm is gathering in the troubled mind ;  
Thoughts after thoughts in wild succession  
rise,

And all within is changing like the skies.  
Their friends persuade them, 'do depart, we  
pray !'

They will not, must not, cannot go away,  
But chill'd with icy fear, for certain tidings  
stay.

And now again there must a boat be seen—  
Men run together ! It must something mean !

Some figure moves upon the ousy bound  
Where flows the tide—Oh! what can he  
have found—

What lost? And who is he?—The only one  
Of the loved three—the Captain's younger son.  
Their boat was fill'd and sank—He knows no  
more,

But that he only hardly reach'd the shore.  
He saw them swimming—for he once was  
near—

But he was sinking, and he could not hear;  
And then the waves curl'd round him, but at  
length,

He struck upon the boat with dying strength,  
And that preserved him: when he turn'd  
around,

Nought but the dark, wild, billowy flood was  
found—

That flood was all he saw, that flood 's the only  
sound—

Save that the angry wind, with ceaseless roar,  
Dash'd the wild waves upon the rocky shore.

The Widows dwell together—so we call  
The younger woman; widow'd are they all:

But she, the poor Elizabeth, it seems  
Not life in her—she lives not, but she dreams;  
She looks on Philip, and in him can find  
Not much to mark in body or in mind—  
He who was saved; and then her very soul  
Is in that scene!—Her thoughts beyond  
control,

Fix'd on that night, and bearing her along,  
Amid the waters terrible and strong;  
Till there she sees within the troubled waves  
The bodies sinking in their wat'ry graves,  
When from her lover, yielding up his breath,  
There comes a voice,—'Farewell, Elizabeth!'

Yet Resignation in the house is seen,  
Subdued Affliction, Piety serene,  
And Hope for ever striving to instil  
The balm for grief—'It is the Heavenly will:'  
And in that will our duty bids us rest,  
For all that Heaven ordains is good, is best;  
We sin and suffer—thus alone we know,  
Grief is our portion, is our part below;  
But we shall rise, that world of bliss to see,  
Where sin and suffering never more shall  
be.

## TALE XIX. MASTER WILLIAM; OR, LAD'S LOVE

### I

I HAVE remembrance of a Boy, whose mind  
Was weak: he seem'd not for the world  
design'd,

Seem'd not as one who in that world could  
strive,

And keep his spirits even and alive—  
A feeling Boy, and happy, though the less,  
From that fine feeling, form'd for happiness.  
His mother left him to his favourite ways,  
And what he made his pleasure brought him  
praise.

Romantic, tender, visionary, mild,  
Affectionate, reflecting when a child,  
With fear instinctive he from harshness fled,  
And gentle tears for all who suffer'd shed;  
Tales of misfortune touch'd his generous  
heart,

Of maidens left, and lovers forced to part.

In spite of all that weak indulgence wrought,  
That love permitted, or that flattery taught,  
In spite of teachers who no fault would find,  
The Boy was neither selfish nor unkind.

Justice and truth his honest heart approved,  
And all things lovely he admired and loved.  
Arabian Nights, and Persian Tales, he read,  
And his pure mind with brilliant wonders fed.  
The long Romances, wild Adventures fired  
His stirring thoughts: he felt like Boy  
inspired.

The cruel fight, the constant love, the art  
Of vile magicians, thrill'd his inmost heart:  
An early Quixote, dreaming dreadful sights  
Of warring dragons, and victorious knights:  
In every dream some beauteous Princess  
shone,

The pride of thousands, and the prize of one.

Not yet he read, nor reading, would ap-  
prove,

The Novel's hero, or its ladies' love.

He would Sophia for a wanton take,  
Jones for a wicked, nay a vulgar rake.

He would no time on Smollett's page bestow;  
Such men he knew not, would d'sdain to  
know:

And if he read, he travell'd slowly on,  
Teazed by the tame and faultless Grandison.

He in that hero's deeds could not delight—  
 'He loved two ladies, and he would not fight.'  
 The minor works of this prolific kind  
 Presented beings he could never find;  
 Beings, he thought, that no man should  
 describe,

A vile, intriguing, lying, perjured tribe,  
 With impious habits, and dishonest views;  
 The men he knew, had souls they feared to  
 lose;

These had no views that could, their sins  
 control,

With them nor fears nor hopes disturb'd the  
 soul.

To dear Romance with fresh delight he  
 turn'd,

And vicious men, like recreant cowards,  
 spurn'd.

The Scripture Stories he with reverence  
 read,

And duly took his Bible to his bed.

Yet Joshua, Samson, David, were a race  
 He dared not with his favourite heroes place.  
 Young as he was, the difference well he  
 knew

Between the Truth, and what we fancy true.  
 He was with these entranced, of those afraid,  
 With Guy he triumph'd, but with David  
 pray'd.

## II

*P.* SUCH was the Boy, and what the man  
 would be,  
 I might conjecture, but could not foresee.

*F.* He has his trials met, his troubles seen,  
 And now deluded, now deserted, been.  
 His easy nature has been oft assail'd  
 By grief assumed, scorn hid, and flattery  
 veil'd.

*P.* But has he, safe and cautious, shunn'd  
 the snares

That life presents?—I ask not of its cares.

*F.* Your gentle Boy a course of life began,  
 That made him what he is, the gentle-man,  
 A man of business. He in courts presides  
 Among their Worship, whom his judgment  
 guides.

He in the Temple studied, and came down  
 A very lawyer, though without a gown;  
 Still he is kind, but prudent, steady, just,  
 And takes but little that he hears on trust;  
 He has no visions now, no boyish plans;  
 All his designs and prospects are the man's,

The man of sound discretion—

*P.* How so made?

What could his mind to change like this  
 persuade—

What first awaken'd our romantic friend—  
 For such he is—

*F.* If you would know, attend.

In those gay years, when boys their man-  
 hood prove,

Because they talk of girls, and dream of love,  
 In William's way there came a maiden fair,  
 With soft, meek look, and sweet retiring air;  
 With just the rosy tint upon her cheek,  
 With sparkling eye, and tongue unused to  
 speak;

With manner decent, quiet, chaste, that one,  
 Modest himself, might love to look upon,  
 As William look'd; and thus the gentle  
 Squire

Began the Nymph, albeit poor, t' admire.  
 She was, to wit, the gardener's niece; her place  
 Gave to her care the Lady's silks and lace;  
 With other duties of an easy kind,  
 And left her time, as much she felt inclined,  
 T' adorn her graceful form, and fill her  
 craving mind;

Nay, left her leisure to employ some hours  
 Of the long day among her uncle's flowers—  
 Myrtle and rose, of which she took the care,  
 And was as sweet as pinks and lilies are.

Such was the damsel whom our Youth  
 beheld

With passion unencouraged, unrepell'd;  
 For how encourage what was not in view?  
 Or how repel what strove not to pursue?

What books inspired, or glowing fancy  
 wrought,

What dreams suggested, or reflection taught,  
 Whate'er of love was to the mind convey'd,  
 Was all directed to his darling maid.

He saw his damsel with a lover's eyes,  
 As pliant fancy wove the fair disguise;  
 A Quixote he, who in his nymph could trace  
 The high-born beauty, changed and—out of  
 place.

That William loved, mamma, with easy smile,  
 Would jesting say; but love *might* grow the  
 while;

The damsel's self, with unassuming pride,  
 With love so led by fear was gratified.

What cause for censure? Could a man  
 reprove

A child for fondness, or miscall it love?

Not William's self ; yet well inform'd was he,  
That love it was, and endless love would be.  
Month after month the sweet delusion bred  
Wild feverish hopes, that flourish'd, and then  
fled,

Like Fanny's sweetest flower, and that was  
lost

In one cold hour, by one harsh morning frost.

In some soft evenings, mid the garden's  
bloom,

Would William wait, till Fanny chanced to  
come ;

And Fanny came, by chance it may be ; still,  
There was a gentle bias of the will,  
Such as the soundest minds may act upon,  
When motives of superior kind are gone.  
There then they met, and Master William's  
look

Was the less timid, for he held a book ;  
And when the sweetness of the evening hours,  
The fresh soft air, the beauty of the flowers,  
The night-bird's note, the gently falling dew,  
Were all discuss'd, and silence would ensue,  
There were some lovely Lines—if she could  
stay—

And Fanny rises not to go away.

' Young Paris was the shepherd's pride,

As well the fair Ænone knew ;

They sat the mountain stream beside,

And o'er the bank a poplar grew.

' Upon its bark this verse he traced,—

Bear witness to the vow I make ;

Thou, Xanthus, to thy source shalt haste,

E'er I my matchless maid forsake.

' No prince or peasant lad am I,

Nor crown nor crook to me belong,

But I will love thee till I die,

And die before I do thee wrong.

' Back to thy source now, Xanthus, run,

Paris is now a prince of Troy ;

He leaves the Fair his flattery won,

Himself and country to destroy.

' He seizes on a sovereign's wife,

The pride of Greece, and with her flies ;

He causes thus a ten years' strife,

And with his dying parent dies.

' Oh ! think me not this Shepherd's Boy,

Who from the Maid he loves would run :

Oh ! think me not a Prince of Troy,

By whom such treacherous deeds are done.'

The Lines were read, and many an idle word  
Pronounced with emphasis, and underscored,  
As if the writer had resolved that all

His nouns and verbs should be emphatical.

But what they were the damsel little thought,

The sense escaped her, but the voice she  
caught ;

Soft, tender, trembling, and the gipsy felt

As if by listening she unfairly dealt :

For she, if not mamma, had rightly guess'd,

That William's bosom was no seat of rest.

But Love's young hope must die.—There  
was a day,

When nature smiled, and all around was gay ;

The Boy o'ertook the damsel as she went

The village road—unknown was her intent ;

He, happy hour, when lock'd in Fanny's arm,

Walk'd on enamour'd, every look a charm ;

Yet her soft looks were but her heart's disguise,

There was no answering love in Fanny's eyes :

But, or by prudence or by pity moved,

She thought it time his folly was reprov'd ;

Then took her measures, not perchance  
without

Some conscious pride in what she was about.

Along the brook, with gentle pace they go,

The Youth unconscious of th' impending  
woe ;

And oft he urged the absent Maid to talk,

As she was wont in many a former walk ;

And still she slowly walk'd beside the brook,

Or look'd around—for what could Fanny look ?

Something there must be ! What, did not  
appear ;

But William's eye betray'd the anxious fear ;  
The cause unseen !—

But who, with giant-stride,  
Bounds o'er the brook, and is at Fanny's side ?

Who takes her arm ? and oh ! what villain  
dares

To press those lips ? Not even her lips he  
spares !

Nay, she herself, the Fanny, the divine,

Lip to his lip can wickedly incline !

The lad, unnerv'd by horror, with an air

Of wonder quits her arm and looks despair ;

Nor will proceed. Oh no ! he must return,

Though his drown'd sight cannot the path  
discern.

' Come, Master William ! come, Sir, let  
us on.

What can you fear ? You're not afraid of  
John ?'

'What ails our youngster?' quoth the burly swain,  
Six feet in height—but he inquires in vain.  
William, in deep resentment scans the frame  
Of the fond giant, and abhors his name;  
Thinks him a demon of th' infernal brood,  
And loths to shed his most pernicious blood.

Again the monster spake in thoughtless joy,  
'We shall be married soon, my pretty Boy!  
And dwell in Madam's cottage, where you'll see  
The strawberry-beds, and cherries on the tree.'

Back to his home in silent scorn return'd  
Th' indignant Boy, and all endearment  
spurn'd.

Fanny perforce with Master takes her way,  
But finds him to th' o'erwhelming grief a  
prey,

Wrapt in resentful silence, till he came  
Where he might vent his woes, and hide his  
shame.

Fierce was his strife, but with success he  
strove,  
And freed his troubled breast from fruitless  
love;

Or what of love his reason fail'd to cool  
Was lost and perish'd in a public school,—  
Those seats and sources both of good and ill,  
By what they cure in Boys, and what they  
kill.

## TALE XX. THE WILL

### I

Thus to his Friend an angry Father spoke—  
'Nay, do not think that I the WILL revoke.  
My cruel Son in every way I've tried,  
And every vice have found in him but pride;  
For he, of pride possess'd, would meaner vices  
hide.

Money he wastes, I will not say he spends;  
Heneither makes the poor nor rich his friends—  
To those he nothing gives, to these he never  
lends.

'Tis for himself each legal pale he breaks;  
He joins the miser's spirit to the rake's:  
Like the worst Roman in the worst of times,  
He can be guilty of conflicting crimes;  
Greedy of others' wealth, unknown the use,  
And of his own contemptuously profuse.

'To such a mind shall I my wealth confide,  
That thou to nobler, worthier ends, may guide?  
No! let my Will my scorn of vice express,  
And let him learn repentance from distress.'

So said the Father; and the Friend, who  
spurn'd

Wealth ill-acquired, his sobers speech return'd—  
'The youth is faulty, but his faults are  
weigh'd

With a strong bias, and by wrath repaid;  
Pleasure deludes him, not the vain design  
Of making vices unallied combine.

He wastes your wealth, for he is yet a  
boy;

He covets more, for he would more enjoy.

For, my good friend, believe me, very few,  
At once are prodigals and misers too—  
The spendthrift vice engrafted on the Jew.  
Leave me one thousand pounds; for I confess  
I have my wants, and will not tax you less.  
But your estate let this young man enjoy;  
If he reforms you've saved a grateful boy,  
If not, a father's cares and troubles cease,  
You've done your duty, and may rest in  
peace.'

The Will in hand, the Father musing stood,  
Then gravely answered, 'Your advice is good;  
Yet take the paper, and in safety keep;  
I'll make another Will before I sleep;  
But if I hear of some atrocious deed,  
That deed I'll burn, and yours will then  
succeed.

Two thousand I bequeath you. No reproof!  
And there are small bequests—he'll have  
enough;

For if he wastes, he would with all be poor,  
And if he wastes not, he will need no more.'

The Friends then parted: this the Will  
possess'd,

And that another made—so things had rest.  
George, who was conscious that his Father  
grew

Sick and infirm, engaged in nothing new;  
No letters came from injured man or maid,  
No bills from wearied duns, that must be paid,  
No fierce reproaches from deserted fair,  
Mixed with wild tenderness of desperate  
prayer;

So hope rose softly in the parent's breast :  
He dying called his son and fondly blest,  
Hailed the propitious tear, and mildly sunk  
to rest.

Unhappy Youth ! e'er yet the tomb was  
closed,

And dust to dust convey'd in peace repos'd,  
He sought his father's closet, search'd around,  
To find a Will: the important Will was found.

Well pleased he read, 'These lands, this  
manor, all,

Now call me master !—I obey the call.'  
Then from the window look'd the valley o'er,  
And never saw it look so rich before.

He view'd the dairy, view'd the men at plough,  
With other eyes, with other feelings now,  
And with a new-formed taste found beauty  
in a cow.

The distant swain who drove the plough along  
Was a good useful slave, and passing strong !  
In short, the view was pleasing, nay, was fine,  
'Good as my father's, excellent as mine !'

Again he reads,—but he had read enough ;  
What followed put his virtue to a proof.

'How this ? to David Wright two thousand  
pounds !

A monstrous sum ! beyond all reason !—  
zounds !

This is your friendship running out of bounds.

'Then here are cousins Susan, Robert, Joe,  
Five hundred each. Do they deserve it ? No !  
Claim they have none—I wonder if they know  
What the good man intended to bestow !

This might be paid—but Wright's enormous  
sum

Is—I'm alone—there's nobody can come—  
'Tis all his hand, no lawyer was employ'd

To write this prose, that ought to be destroy'd !  
To no attorney would my father trust :

He wished his son to judge of what was just ;  
As if he said, "My boy will find the Will,

And, as he likes, destroy it or fulfil."  
This now is reason, this I understand—

What was at his, is now at my command.  
As for this paper, with these cousiny names,

I—'tis *my* Will—commit it to the flames.  
Hence ! disappear ! now am I lord alone :

They'll groan, I know, but, curse them, let  
them groan.

Who wants his money like a new-made heir,  
To put all things in order and repair ?

I need the whole the worthy man could save,  
To do my father credit in his grave :

It takes no trifle to have squires convey'd  
To their last house with honour and parade.  
All this, attended by a world of cost,  
Requires, demands, that nothing should be  
lost.

These fond bequests cannot demanded be—  
Where no Will is, can be no legacy ;

And none is here ! I safely swear it—none !—  
The very ashes are dispersed and gone.

All would be well, would that same sober  
Friend,

That Wright, my father on his way attend :  
My fears—but why afraid ?—my troubles  
then would end.'

In triumph, yet in trouble, meets our Squire  
The friends assembled, who a Will require.

'There is no Will,' he said.—They murmur  
and retire.

Days pass away, while yet the Heir is blest  
By pleasant cares, and thoughts that banish  
rest ;

When comes the Friend, and asks, in solemn  
tone,

If he may see the busy Squire alone.  
They are in private—all about is still—

When thus the Guest :—'Your father left  
a Will,

And I would see it.'—Rising in reply,  
The youth beheld a fix'd and piercing eye,

From which his own receded ; and the sound  
Of his own words was in disorder drown'd.

He answered softly,—'I in vain have spent  
Days in the search ; I pray you be content ;

And if a Will—' The pertinacious Man,  
At *if* displeased, with steady tone began,—

'There is a Will—produce it, for you can.'—  
'Sir, I have sought in vain, and what the  
use ?

What has no being, how can I produce ?'—  
'Two days I give you ; to my words attend,'

Was the reply, 'and let the business end.'  
Two days were past, and still the same reply

To the same question—'Not a Will have I.'  
More grave, more earnest, then the Friend

appear'd :

He spoke with power, as one who would be  
heard,—

'A Will your father made ! I witness'd one.'  
The Heir arose in anger—'Sir, begone !

Think you my spirit by your looks to awe ?  
Go to your lodgings, friend, or to your law :

To what would you our easy souls persuade ?  
Once more I tell you, not a Will was made :

There's none with me, I swear it—now, deny  
This if you can!—

‘That, surely, cannot I;  
Nay, I believe you, and, as no such deed  
Is found with you, *this* surely will succeed!’—

He said, and from his pocket slowly drew  
Of the first testament a copy true,  
And held it spread abroad, that he might see  
it too.

‘Read, and be sure; your parent's pleasure  
see—

Then leave this mansion and these lands to  
me.’

He said, and terror seized the guilty youth;  
He saw his misery, meanness, and the truth;  
Could not before his stern accuser stand,  
Yet could not quit that hall, that park, that  
land;

But when surprise had pass'd away, his grief  
Began to think in law to find relief.

‘While courts are open, why should  
I despair?

Juries will feel for an abandon'd heir:  
I will resist,’ he said, impell'd by pride;—  
‘I must submit,’ recurring fear replied.  
As wheels the vane when winds around it play,  
So his strong passions turn'd him every  
way;

But growing terrors seized th' unhappy youth:  
He knew the Man, and more, he knew—the  
Truth.

When, stung by all he fear'd, and all he felt,  
He sought for mercy, and in terror knelt.

Grieved, but indignant,—‘Let me not  
despise

Thy father's son,’ replied the Friend: ‘arise!  
To my fix'd purpose your attention lend,  
And know, your fate will on yourself depend.

‘Thou shalt not want, young man! nor yet  
abound,

And time shall try thee, if thy heart be sound;  
Thou shalt be watch'd till thou hast learn'd  
to know

Th' All-seeing Watcher of the world below,  
And worlds above, and thoughts within;  
from Whom

Must be thy certain, just, and final doom.  
Thy doors all closely barr'd, thy windows  
blind,

Before all silent, silent all behind—  
Thy hand was stretch'd to do whate'er thy  
soul

In secret would—no mortal could control.

Oh, fool! to think that thou thy act could'st  
keep

From that All-piercing Eye, which cannot  
sleep!

‘Go to thy trial! and may I with thee,  
A fellow-sinner, who to mercy flee—

That mercy find, as justly I dispense  
Between thy frailty and thy penitence.

‘Go to thy trial! and be wise in time,  
And know that no man can conceal a crime.

God and his Conscience witness all that's done,  
And these he cannot cheat, he cannot shun.

What, then, could fortune, what could safety  
give,

If He with these at enmity must live?

‘Go!’—and the young man from his  
presence went,

Confused, uncertain of his own intent—

To sin, if pride prevail'd; if soften'd, to repent.

## II

P. LIVES yet the Friend of that unhappy  
Boy,

Who could the WILL that made him rich  
destroy,

And made him poor? And what the after-  
plan,

For one so selfish, of that stern, good man?

F. ‘Choose,’ said this Friend, ‘thy way  
in life, and I

Will means to aid thee in thy work supply.’  
He will the army, thought this guardian,

choose,

And there the sense of his dishonour lose.

Humbly he answer'd,—‘With your kind  
consent,

Of your estate I would a portion rent,

And farm with care—’

‘Alas! the wretched fruit  
Of evil habit! he will hunt and shoot.’

So judged the Friend, but soon perceived  
a change,

To him important, and to all men strange.  
Industrious, temperate, with the sun he rose,

And of his time gave little to repose:

Nor to the labour only bent his will,  
But sought experience, and improved with  
skill;

With cautious prudence placed his gains to  
use,

Inquiring always, ‘What will this produce?’

The Friend, not long suspicious, now began  
To think more kindly of the alter'd man—

In his opinion alter'd, but, in truth,  
The same the spirit that still ruled the youth :  
That dwelt within, where other demons dwell,  
Avarice unsated, and insatiable.

But this Wright saw not: he was more inclined

To trace the way of a repenting mind ;  
And he was now by strong disease assail'd,  
That quickly o'er the vital powers prevail'd :  
And now the son had all, was rich beyond  
His fondest hope, and he, indeed, was fond.

His life's great care has been his zeal to prove,  
And time to dotage has increased his love.  
A Miser now, the one strong passion guides  
The heart and soul: there's not a love be-  
sides.

Where'er life comes, he sees in every face  
A look that tells him of his own disgrace.  
Men's features vary, but the mildest show  
'It is a tale of infamy we know.'

Some with contempt the wealthy miser view,  
Some with disgust, yet mix'd with pity too ;  
A part the looks of wrath and hatred wear,  
And some, less happy, lose their scorn in fear.

Meanwhile, devoid of kindness, comfort,  
friends,

On his possessions solely he depends.

Yet is he wretched ; for his fate decrees  
That his own feelings should deny him ease.  
With talents gifted, he himself reproves,  
And can but scorn the vile pursuit he loves ;  
He can but feel that there abides within  
The secret shame, the unrepented sin,  
And the strong sense, that bids him to confess  
He has not found the way to happiness.

But 'tis the way where he has travell'd  
long,—

And turn he will not, though he feels it wrong ;  
Like a sad traveller, who, at closing day,  
Finds he has wander'd widely from his way,  
Yet wanders on, nor will new paths explore,  
Till the night falls, and he can walk no more.

## TALE XXI. THE COUSINS

### I

P. I LEFT a frugal Merchant, who began  
Early to thrive, and grew a wealthy man ;  
Retired from business with a favourite Niece,  
He lived in plenty, or if not—in peace.  
Their small affairs, conforming to his will,  
The maiden managed with superior skill.  
He had a Nephew too, a brother's child,—  
But James offended, for the lad was wild :  
And Patty's tender soul was vex'd to hear,  
'Your Cousin James will rot in gaol, my dear ;  
And now, I charge you, by no kind of gift  
Show him that folly may be help'd by thrift.'  
This Patty heard, but in her generous mind  
Precept so harsh could no admission find.

Her cousin James, too sure in prison laid,  
With strong petitions plied the gentle maid,  
That she would humbly on their Uncle press  
His deep repentance, and his sore distress ;  
How that he mourn'd in durance, night and  
day,

And which removed, he would for ever pray.  
'Nought will I give, his worthless life to  
save,'

The Uncle said ; and nought in fact he gave :

But the kind maiden from her pittance took  
All that she could, and gave with pitying look ;  
For soft compassion in her bosom reign'd,  
And her heart melted when the Youth com-  
plain'd.

Of his complaints the Uncle loved to hear,  
As Patty told them, shedding many a tear ;  
While he would wonder how the girl could  
pray

For a young rake, to place him in her way,  
Or once admit him in his Uncle's view ;  
'But these,' said he, 'are things that women  
do.'

Thus were the Cousins, young, unguarded,  
fond,

Bound in true friendship—so they named the  
bond—

Nor call'd it love—and James resolved, when  
free,

A most correct and frugal man to be.

He sought her prayers, but not for heavenly  
aid :

'Pray to my Uncle,' and she kindly pray'd—  
'James will be careful,' said the Niece ;  
'and I

Will be as careful,' was the stern reply.



Thus he resisted, and I know not how  
He could be soften'd—Is he kinder now?  
Hard was his heart; but yet a heart of steel  
May melt in dying, and dissolving feel.

## II

F. WHAT were his feelings I cannot explain,  
His actions only on my mind remain.  
He never married, that indeed we know,  
But childless was not, as his foes could show.—  
Perhaps his friends—for friends, as well as foes,  
Will the infirmities of man disclose.

When young, our Merchant, though of sober  
fame,

Had a rude passion that he could not tame;  
And, not to dwell upon the passion's strife,  
He had a Son, who never had a wife;  
The father paid just what the law required,  
Nor saw the infant, nor to see desired.

That infant, thriving on the parish fare,  
Without a parent's love, consent, or care,  
Became a sailor, and sustain'd his part  
So like a man, it touch'd his father's heart:—  
He for protection gave the ready pay,  
And placed the seaman in preferment's way;  
Who doubted not, with sanguine heart, to  
rise,  
And bring home riches, gain'd from many  
a prize.

But Jack—for so we call'd him—Jack once  
more,

And never after, touch'd his native shore:  
Nor was it known if he in battle fell,  
Or sickening died—we sought, but none could  
tell.

The father sigh'd—as some report, he wept;  
And then his sorrow with the Sailor slept;  
Then age came on; he found his spirits droop,  
And his kind Niece remain'd the only hope.

Premising this, our story then proceeds—  
Our gentle Patty for her Cousin pleads;  
And now her Uncle, to his room confined,  
And kindly nursed, was soften'd and was kind.  
James, whom the law had from his prison sent,  
With much contrition to his Uncle went,  
And, humbly kneeling, said, 'Forgive me,  
I repent.'

Reproach, of course, his humbled spirit bore;  
He knew for pardon anger opens the door;  
The man whom we with too much warmth  
reprove,

Has the best chance our softening hearts to  
move;

And this he had—'Why, Patty, love! it  
seems,'

Said the old man, 'there's something good  
in James:

I must forgive; but you, my child, are yet,  
My stay and prop; I cannot this forget.

Still, my dear Niece, as a reforming man,  
I mean to aid your Cousin, if I can.'

Then Patty smiled, for James and she had  
now

Time for their loves, and pledged the constant  
vow.

James the fair way to favouring thoughts  
discern'd—

He learn'd the news, and told of all he learn'd;  
Read all the papers in an easy style,  
And knew the bits would raise his Uncle's  
smile;

Then would refrain, to hear the good man say,  
'You did not come as usual yesterday:

I must not take you from your duties, lad,  
But of your daily visits should be glad!'

Patty was certain that their Uncle now  
Would their affection all it ask'd allow;  
She was convinced her lover now would find  
The past forgotten and old Uncle kind.

'It matters not,' she added, 'who receives  
The larger portion; what to one he leaves  
We both inherit! let us nothing hide,  
Dear James, from him in whom we both  
confide.'

'Not for your life!' quoth James. 'Let  
Uncle choose

Our ways for us—or we the way shall lose.  
For know you, Cousin, all these miser men—'  
'Nay, my dear James!'

'Our worthy Uncle, then,  
And all like Uncle like—to be obey'd

By their dependants, who must seem afraid  
Of their own will:—If we to wed incline,

You'll quickly hear him peevishly repine,  
Object, dispute, and sundry reasons give,  
To prove we ne'er could find the means to  
live;

And then, due credit for his speech to gain,  
He'll leave us poor—lest wealth should prove  
it vain.

Let him propose the measure, and then we  
May for his pleasure to his plan agree.

I, when at last assenting, shall be still  
But giving way to a kind Uncle's will;

Then will he deem it just, amends to make  
To one who ventures all things for his sake;

So, should you deign to take this worthless hand,

Be sure, dear Patty, 'tis at his command.'

But Patty questioned—'Is it, let me ask, The will of God that we should wear a mask?' This startled James: he lifted up his eyes, And said with some contempt, besides surprise,

'Patty, my love! the will of God, 'tis plain, Is that we live by what we can obtain; Shall we a weak and foolish man offend, And when our trial is so near an end?'

This hurt the maiden, and she said, 'Tis well!

Unask'd I will not of your purpose tell, But will not lie.'

'Lie! Patty, no, indeed, Your downright lying never will succeed! A better way our prudence may devise, Than such unprofitable things as lies. Yet, a dependant, if he would not starve, The way through life must with discretion carve,

And, though a lie he may with pride disdain, He must not every useless truth maintain. If one respect to these fond men would show, Conceal the facts that give them pain to know; While all that pleases may be placed in view, And if it be not, they will think it true.'

The humble Patty dropp'd a silent tear, And said, 'Indeed, 'tis best to be sincere.' James answer'd not—there could be no reply To what he would not grant, nor could deny: But from that time he in the maiden saw What he condemn'd; yet James was kept in awe;

He felt her virtue, but was sore afraid For the frank blunders of the virtuous maid.

Meantime he daily to his Uncle read The news, and to his favourite subjects led: If closely press'd, he sometimes staid to dine, Eat of one dish, and drank one glass of wine; For James was crafty grown, and felt his way To favour, step by step, and day by day; He talk'd of business, till the Uncle prized The lad's opinion, whom he once despised, And, glad to see him thus his faults survive, 'This Boy,' quoth he, 'will keep our name alive.

Women are weak, and Patty, though the best Of her weak sex, is woman like the rest: An idle husband will her money spend, And bring my hard-earn'd savings to an end.'

Far as he dared, his Nephew this way led, And told his tales of lasses rashly wed, Told them as matters that he heard,—'He knew

Not where,' he said: 'they might be false, or true;

One must confess that girls are apt to dote On the bright scarlet of a coxcomb's coat; And that with ease a woman they beguile With a fool's flattery, or a rascal's smile; But then,' he added, fearing to displease, 'Our Patty never saw such men as these.'

'True! but she may—some scoundrel may command

The girl's whole store, if he can gain her hand: Her very goodness will itself deceive, And her weak virtue help her to believe; Yet she is kind; and, Nephew! go, and say,

I need her now—You'll come another day.'

In such discourses, while the maiden went About her household, many an hour was spent, Till James was sure that when his Uncle died, He should at least the property divide: Nor long had he to wait—the fact was quickly tried.

The Uncle now to his last bed confined, To James and Patty his affairs resign'd; The doctor took his final fee in hand, The man of law received his last command; The silent priest sat watching in his chair, If he might wake the dying man to prayer,— When the last groan was heard; then all was still,

And James indulged his musings—on the Will.

This in due time was read, and Patty saw Her own dear Cousin made the heir-by-law. Something indeed was hers, but yet she felt As if her Uncle had not kindly dealt; And that James was one whom she could trust,

She would have thought it cruel and unjust. Ev'n as it was, it gave her some surprise, And tears unbidden started in her eyes; Yet she confess'd it was the same to her, And it was likely men would men prefer.

Loth was the Niece to think her Uncle wrong; And other thoughts engaged her—'Is it long That custom bids us tarry ere we wed, When a kind Uncle is so lately dead? At any rate,' the maiden judged, 'tis he That first will speak—it does not rest with me.'

James to the Will his every thought con-  
fined,  
And found some parts that vex'd his sober  
mind.

He, getting much, to angry thoughts gave way,  
For the poor pittance that he had to pay,  
With Patty's larger claim. Save these alone,  
The weeping heir beheld the whole his own;  
Yet something painful in his mind would  
dwell,—

'It was not likely, but was possible:—  
No—Fortune lately was to James so kind,  
He was determined not to think her blind:  
'She saw his merit, and would never throw  
His prospects down by such malicious blow.'

Patty, meanwhile, had quite enough be-  
tray'd

Of her own mind to make her James afraid  
Of one so simply pure: his hardening heart  
Inclined to anger—he resolved to part:  
Why marry Patty?—if he look'd around,  
More advantageous matches might be found;  
But though he might a richer wife command,  
He first must break her hold upon his hand.

She with a spinster-friend retired awhile,  
'Not long,' she said, and said it with a smile.  
Not so had James determined:—He essay'd  
To move suspicion in the gentle maid.

Words not succeeding, he design'd to pass  
The spinster's window with some forward lass.  
If in her heart so pure no pang was known,  
At least he might affect it in his own.

There was a brother of her friend, and he,  
Though poor and rude, might serve for  
jealousy.

If all should fail, he, though of schemes bereft,  
Might leave her yet!—They fail'd, and she  
was left.

Poor Patty bore it with a woman's mind,  
And with an angel's, sorrowing and resign'd.  
Ere this in secret long she wept and pray'd,  
Long tried to think her lover but delay'd  
The union, once his hope, his prayer, his  
pride;—

She could in James as in herself confide:  
Was he not bound by all that man can bind,  
In love, in honour, to be just and kind?  
Large was his debt, and when their debts are  
large,

The ungrateful cancel what the just discharge;  
Nor payment only in their pride refuse,  
But first they wrong their friend, and then  
accuse.

Thus Patty finds her bosom's claims denied,  
Her love insulted, and her right defied.  
She urged it not; her claim the maid with-  
drew,

For maiden pride would not the wretch pursue:  
She sigh'd to find him false, herself so good  
and true.

Now all his fears, at least the present, still,—  
He talk'd, good man! about his uncle's will,—  
'All unexpected,' he declared,—'surprised  
Was he—and his good uncle ill-advised:  
He no such luck had look'd for, he was  
sure,

Nor such deserved,' he said, with look demure;  
He did not merit such exceeding love,  
But his, he meant, so help him God, to prove.'  
And he has proved it! all his cares and  
schemes

Have proved the exceeding love. James bears  
to James.

But to proceed,—for we have yet the facts  
That show how Justice looks on wicked acts;  
For, though not always, she at times appears—  
To wake in man her salutary fears.

James, restless grown—for no such mind  
can rest—

Would build a house, that should his wealth  
attest;

In fact, he saw, in many a clouded face,  
A certain token of his own disgrace;  
And wish'd to overawe the murmurs of the  
place.

The finish'd building show'd the master's  
wealth,

And noisy workmen drank his Honour's  
health—

'His and his heirs'—and at the thoughtless  
word

A strange commotion in his bosom stirr'd.  
'Heirs! said the idiots?'—and again that  
clause

In the strange Will corrected their applause.  
Prophetic fears! for now reports arose  
That spoil'd 'his Honour's' comforts and  
repose.

A stout young Sailor, though in battle maim'd,  
Arrived in port, and his possessions claim'd.  
The Will he read: he stated his demand,  
And his attorney grasp'd at house and land.  
The Will provided—'If my son survive,  
He shall inherit;' and lo! Jack's alive!  
Yes! he was that lost lad, preserved by fate,  
And now was bent on finding his estate.

But claim like this the angry James denied,  
And to the law the sturdy heir applied.

James did what men when placed like him  
would do—

Avow'd his right, and fee'd his lawyer too :

The Will, indeed, provided for a son ;

But was this Sailor youth the very one ?

Ere Jack's strong proofs in all their strength  
were shown,

To gain a part James used a milder tone ;

But the instructed tar would reign alone.

At last he reign'd : to James a large bequest  
Was frankly dealt ; the Seaman had the  
rest—

Save a like portion to the gentle Niece,  
Who lived in comfort, and regain'd her peace.

In her neat room her talent she employ'd,

With more true peace than ever James enjoy'd.

The young, the aged, in her praise agreed—

Meek in her manner, bounteous in her deed ;

The very children their respect avow'd :

' 'Twas the good lady,' they were told, and  
bow'd.

The merry Seaman much the maid ap-  
prov'd,—

Nor that alone—he like a seaman loved ;

Loved as a man who did not much complain,

Loved like a sailor, not a sighing swain ;

Had heard of wooing maids, but knew not  
how—

' Lass, if you love me, prithee tell me now,'

Was his address—but this was nothing cold—

' Tell if you love me ; ' and she smiled and  
told.

He bought her presents, such as sailors  
buy,

Glittering like gold, to please a maiden's eye,

All silk, and silver, fringe and finery :

These she accepted in respect to him,

And thought but little of the missing limb.

Of this he told her, for he loved to tell

A warlike tale, and judged he told it well :—

' You mark me, love ! the French were two  
to one,

And so, you see, they were ashamed to run ;

We fought an hour ; and then there came  
the shot

That struck me here—a man must take his  
lot ;—

A minute after, and the Frenchman struck :

One minute sooner had been better luck

But if you can a crippled cousin like,

You ne'er shall see him for a trifle strike.'

Patty, whose gentle heart was not so nice

As to reject the thought of loving twice,

Judged her new Cousin was by nature kind,

With no suspicions in his honest mind,

Such as our virtuous ladies now and then

Find strongly floating in the minds of men.

So they were married, and the lasses vow'd

That Patty's luck would make an angel  
proud :

' Not but that time would come when she  
must prove

That men are men, no matter how they  
love :—

And she has prov'd it ; for she finds her man  
As kind and true as when their loves began.

James is unhappy ; not that he is poor,

But, having much, because he has no more ;

Because a rival's pleasure gives him pain ;

Because his vices work'd their way in vain ;

And, more than these, because he sees the  
smile

Of a wrong'd woman pitying man so vile.

He sought an office, serves in the excise,

And every wish, but that for wealth, denies ;

Wealth is the world to him, and he is worldy  
wise.

But disappointment in his face appears ;

Care and vexation, sad regret and fears

Have fix'd on him their fangs, and done the  
work of years.

Yet grows he wealthy in a strange degree,

And neighbours wonder how the fact can be :

He lives alone, contracts a sordid air,

And sees with sullen grief the cheerful pair ;

Feels a keen pang, as he beholds the door

Where peace abides, and mutters,—' *I am  
poor !*'

## TALE XXII. PREACHING AND PRACTICE

## I

P. WHAT I have ask'd are questions that relate

To those once known, that I might learn their fate.

But there was ONE, whom though I scarcely knew,

Much do I wish to learn his fortunes too.

Yet what expect?—He was a rich man's Heir,  
His conduct doubtful, but his prospects fair;  
Thoughtless and brave, extravagant and gay,  
Wild as the wind, and open as the day;  
His freaks and follies were a thousand times  
Brought full in view: I heard not of his crimes.

Like our Prince Hal, his company he chose  
Among the lawless, of restraint the foes;  
But though to their poor pleasures he could stoop,

He was not, rumour said, their victim-dupe.

His mother's Sister was a maiden prim,  
Pious and poor, and much in debt to him.  
This she repaid with volumes of reproof,  
And sage advice, till he would cry 'Enough!'

His father's Brother no such hints allow'd,  
Peevish and rich, and insolent and proud,  
Of stern, strong spirit: Him the Youth withstood,

At length, 'Presume not (said he) on our blood;

Treat with politeness him whom you advise,  
Nor think I fear your doting prophecies;  
And fame has told of many an angry word,  
When anger this, and that contempt had stirr'd.

'Boy! thou wilt beg thy bread, I plainly see.'—

'Upbraid not, Uncle! till I beg of thee.'

'Oh! thou wilt run to ruin and disgrace.'—

'What! and so kind an Uncle in the place?'

'Nay, for I hold thee stranger to my blood.'

'Then must I treat thee as a stranger would:  
For if you throw the tie of blood aside,  
You must the roughness of your speech abide.'

'What! to your father's Brother do you give  
A challenge?—Mercy! in what times we live!'

Now, I confess, the youth who could supply  
Thus that poor Spinster, and could thus defy

This wealthy Uncle;—who could mix with them

Whom his strong sense and feeling must condemn,

And in their follies his amusement find,  
Yet never lose the vigour of his mind—  
A youth like this, with much we must reprove,  
Had something still to win esteem and love.  
Perhaps he lives not; but he seem'd not made  
To pass through life entirely in the shade.

F. Suppose you saw him,—does your mind retain

So much, that you would know the man again?  
Yet hold in mind, he may have felt the press  
Of grief or guilt, the withering of distress;  
He now may show the stamp of woe and pain,  
And nothing of his lively cast remain.

Survey these features—see if nothing there  
May old impressions on your mind repair!  
Is there not something in this shattered frame  
Like to that—

P. No! not like it, but the same;  
That eye so brilliant, and that smile so gay,  
Are lighted up, and sparkle through decay.

But may I question? Will you that allow?  
There was a difference, and there must be now;  
And yet, permitted, I would gladly hear  
What must have pass'd in many a troubled year.

F. Then hear my tale; but I the price demand;

That understood, I too must understand  
Thy wanderings through, or sufferings in the land;

And, if our virtues cannot much produce,  
Perhaps our errors may be found of use.

To all the wealth my Father's care laid by,  
I added wings, and taught it how to fly.

To him that act had been of grievous sight,  
But he survived not to behold the flight.

Strange doth it seem to grave and sober minds;  
How the dear vice the simple votary blinds,  
So that he goes to ruin smoothly on,  
And scarcely feels he's going, till he's gone.

I had made over, in a lucky hour,  
Funds for my Aunt, and placed beyond my power:

The rest was flown, I speak it with remorse,  
And now a pistol seem'd a thing in course.

But though its precepts I had not obey'd,  
Thoughts of my Bible made me much afraid  
Of such rebellion, and though not content,  
I must live on when life's supports were spent;  
Nay, I must eat, and of my frugal Aunt  
Must grateful take what gracious she would  
grant;

And true, she granted, but with much dis-  
course;

Oh! with what words did she her sense  
enforce!

Great was her wonder, in my need that I  
Should on the prop myself had raised rely—  
I, who provided for her in my care,  
'Must be assured how little she could spare!'

I stood confounded, and with angry tone,  
With rage and grief, that blended oath and  
groan,

I fled her presence—yet I saw her air  
Of resignation, and I heard her prayer;  
'Now Heaven,' she utter'd, 'make his burden  
light!'

And I, in parting, cried, 'Thou hypocrite!'  
But I was wrong—she might have meant  
to pray;

Though not to give her soul—her cash—away.  
Of course, my Uncle would the spendthrift  
shun;

So friends on earth I now could reckon none.

One morn I rambled, thinking of the past,  
Far in the country—Did you ever fast  
Through a long summer's day? or, sturdy,  
go

To pluck the crab, the bramble, and the sloe,  
The hyp, the cornel, and the beech, the food  
And the wild solace of the gypsy brood?

To pick the cress embrown'd by summer sun,  
From the dry bed where streams no longer  
run?

Have you, like school-boy, mingling play and  
toil,

Dug for the ground-nut, and enjoy'd the  
spoil?

Or chafed with feverish hand the ripening  
wheat,

Resolved to fast, and yet compelled to eat?  
Say, did you this, and drink the crystal  
spring,

And think yourself an abdicated king,  
Driv'n from your state by a rebellious race?  
And in your pride contending with disgrace,

Could you your hunger in your anger lose,  
And call the ills you bear the ways you choose?

Thus on myself depending, I began  
To feel the pride of a neglected man;  
Not yet correct, but still I could command  
Unshaken nerves, and a determined hand.

'Lo! men at work!' I said, 'and I a man  
Can work! I feel it is my pride, I can.'

This said, I wander'd on, and join'd the poor,  
Assumed a labourer's dress, and was no more  
Than labour made—Upon the road I broke  
Stones for my bread, and startled at the stroke;  
But every day the labour seem'd more light,  
And sounder, sweeter still the sleep of every  
night.

'Thus will I live,' I cried, 'nor more return  
To herd with men, whose love and hate I spurn.  
All creatures toil; the beast, if tamed or free,  
Must toil for daily sustenance like me;  
The feather'd people hunt as well as sing,  
And catch their flying food upon the wing.  
The fish, the insect, all who live, employ  
Their powers to keep on life, or to enjoy,  
Their life th' enjoyment; thus will I proceed,  
A man from man's detested favours freed.'

Thus was I reasoning, when at length there  
came

A gift, a present, but without a name.  
'That Spinster-witch, has she then found a way  
To cure her conscience, and her Nephew pay,  
And sends her pittance? Well, and let it buy  
What sweetens labour; need I this deny?  
I thank her not; it is as if I found  
The fairy-gift upon this stony ground.'

Still I wrought on; again occurred the day,  
And then the same addition to my pay.

Then, lo! another Friend, if not the same,  
For that I knew not, with a message came—  
'Canst keep accounts?' the man was pleased  
to ask—

'I could not cash!—but that the harder task.'  
'Yet try,' he said; and I was quickly brought,  
To Lawyer Snell, and in his office taught.  
Not much my pay, but my desires were less,  
And I for evil days reserved th' excess.

Such days occur'd not: quickly came there  
one,

When I was told my present work was done:  
My Friend then brought me to a building large,  
And gave far weightier business to my charge.  
There I was told I had accounts to keep,  
Of those vast Works, where wonders never  
sleep,

Where spindles, bobbins, rovings, threads, and  
pins,

Made up the complex mass that ever spins.

There, at my desk, in my six feet of room,  
I noted every power of every loom ;  
Sounds of all kinds I heard from mortal  
lungs—

Eternal battle of unwearied tongues,  
The jar of men and women, girls and boys,  
And the huge Babel's own dull whirring,  
grinding noise.

My care was mark'd, and I had soon in  
charge

Important matters, and my pay was large.  
I at my fortune marvell'd ; it was strange,  
And so the outward and the inward change,  
Till to the Power who 'gives and takes away'  
I turn'd in praise, and taught my soul to pray.

Another came ! 'I come,' he said, 'to show,  
Your unknown Friend—have you a wish to  
know ?'

Much I desired, and forth we rode, and found  
My Uncle dying, but his judgment sound.  
The good old man, whom I abused, had been  
The guardian power, directing but unseen ;  
And thus the wild but grateful boy he led  
To take new motives at his dying bed.

The rest you judge—I now have all I need—  
And now the tale you promised !—Come,  
proceed.

---

P. 'Tis due, I own, but yet in mercy spare :  
Alas ! no Uncle was my guide—my care  
Was all my own ; no guardian took a share.  
I, like Columbus, for a world unknown—  
'Twas no great effort—sacrificed my own—

My own sad world, where I had never seen  
The earth productive, or the sky serene.

But this is past—and I at length am come  
To see what changes have been wrought at  
home ;

Happy in this, that I can set me down  
At worst a stranger in my native town.

F. Then be it so ! but mean you not to  
show

How time has pass'd ? for we expect to know :  
And if you tell not, know you we shall trace  
Your movements for ourselves from place to  
place.

Your wants, your wishes, all you've sought  
or seen,

Shall be the food for our remark and spleen.

So, warn'd in time, the real page unfold,

And let the Truth, before the Lie, be told.

P. This might be done ; but wonders  
I have none,

All my adventures are of Self alone.

F. What then ? I grant you, if your way  
was clear,

All smooth and right—we've no desire to hear ;

But if you've lewd and wicked things to tell,  
Low passions, cruel deeds, nay crimes—'tis  
well :

Who would not listen ?—

P. Hark ! I hear the bell.  
It calls to dinner with inviting sound,  
For now we know where dinners may be  
found,

And can behold and share the glad repast,  
Without a dread that we behold our last.

F. Come then, shy friend, let doleful sub-  
jects cease,

And thank our God that we can dine in peace.

# OCCASIONAL POEMS AFTER 1780

## FROM BELVOIR CASTLE

[About 1782]

Oh! had I but a little hut,  
That I might hide my head in;  
Where never guest might dare molest  
Unwelcome or unbidden.  
I'd take the jokes of other folks,  
And mine should then succeed 'em,  
Nor would I chide a little pride,  
Or heed a little freedom.

## THE LADIES OF THE LAKE

WRITTEN ON VISITING NORMANSTON IN THE  
YEAR 1785

SHALL I, who oft have woo'd the Muse  
For gentle Ladies' sake,  
So fair a theme as this refuse—  
The Ladies of the Lake?  
Hail, happy pair! 'tis yours to share  
Life's elegance and ease;  
The bliss of wealth without the care,  
The will and power to please,—  
To please, but not alone our eyes,  
Nor yet alone our mind;  
Your taste, your goodness, charm the wise—  
Your manners all mankind.  
The pleasant scenes that round you glow,  
Like caskets fraught with gold,  
Though beauteous in themselves, yet owe  
Their worth to what they hold.  
Trees may be found, and lakes, as fair;  
Fresh lawns, and gardens green;  
But where again the Sister-pair  
Who animate the scene?  
Where sense of that superior kind,  
Without man's haughty air?  
And where, without the trifling mind,  
The softness of the fair?  
Folly, with wealth, may idly raise  
Her hopes to shine like you,  
And humble flattery sound her praise,  
Till she believes it true;  
But wealth no more can give that grace  
To souls of meaner kind,  
Than summer's fiery sun can chase  
Their darkness from the blind.

But drop, you'll say, the useless pen:

Reluctant—I obey,

Yet let me take it once again,

If not to praise, to pray

That you, with partial grace, may deign

This poor attempt to take,

And I may oft behold again

The Ladies of the Lake.

## INFANCY—A FRAGMENT

[Date uncertain]

Who on the new-born light can back return,

And the first efforts of the soul discern—

Waked by some sweet maternal smile, no more

To sleep so long or fondly as before?

No! Memory cannot reach, with all her  
power,

To that new birth, that life-awakening hour.

No! all the traces of her first employ

Are keen perceptions of the senses' joy,

And their distaste—what then could they  
impart?—

That figs were luscious, and that rods had  
smart.

But, though the Memory in that dubious  
way

Recalls the dawn and twilight of her day,

And thus encounters, in the doubtful view,

With imperfection and distortion too;

Can she not tell us, as she looks around,

Of good and evil, which the most abound?

Alas! and what is earthly good? 'tis lent

Evil to hide, to soften, to prevent,

By scenes and shows that cheat the wandering  
eye,

While the more pompous misery passes by;

Shifts and amusements that awhile succeed,

And heads are turn'd, that bosoms may not  
bleed:

For what is Pleasure, that we toil to gain?

'Tis but the slow or rapid flight of Pain.

Set Pleasure by, and there would yet remain,

For every nerve and sense the sting of Pain:

Set Pain aside, and fear no more the sting,

And whence your hopes and pleasures can ye  
bring?

No! there is not a joy beneath the skies,

That from no grief nor trouble shall arise.



Why does the Lover with such rapture fly  
To his dear mistress?—He shall show us  
why :—

Because her absence is such cause of grief  
That her sweet smile alone can yield relief.  
Why, then, that smile is Pleasure:—True,  
yet still

'Tis but the absence of the former ill :  
For, married, soon at will he comes and goes ;  
Then pleasures die, and pains become repose,  
And he has none of these, and therefore none  
of those.

Yes ! looking back as early as I can,  
I see the griefs that seize their subject Man,  
That in the weeping Child their early reign  
began :

Yes ! though Pain softens, and is absent since,  
He still controls me like my lawful prince.

Joys I remember, like phosphoric light  
Or squibs and crackers on a gala night.  
Joys are like oil ; if thrown upon the tide  
Of flowing life, they mix not, nor subside :  
Griefs are like waters on the river thrown,  
They mix entirely, and become its own.

Of all the good that grew of early date,  
I can but parts and incidents relate :  
A guest arriving, or a borrow'd day  
From school, or schoolboy triumph at some  
play :

And these from Pain may be deduced ; for  
these

Removed some ill, and hence their power to  
please.

But it was Misery stung me in the day  
Death of an infant sister made a prey ;  
For then first met and moved my early fears,  
A father's terrors, and a mother's tears.

Though greater anguish I have since en-  
dured,—

Some heal'd in part, some never to be cured ;  
Yet was there something in that first-born  
ill,

So new, so strange, that memory feels it still !

That my first grief : but, oh ! in after-years  
Were other deaths, that call'd for other tears.  
No ! that I cannot, that I dare not, paint—  
That patient sufferer, that enduring saint,  
Holy and lovely—but all words are faint.

But here I dwell not—let me, while I can,  
Go to the Child, and lose the suffering Man.

Sweet was the morning's breath, the inland  
tide,

And our boat gliding, where alone could glide

Small craft—and they oft touch'd on either  
side.

It was my first-born joy. I heard them say,  
'Let the child go ; he will enjoy the day.'  
For children ever feel delighted when  
They take their portion, and enjoy with men.  
Give him the pastime that the old partake,  
And he will quickly top and taw forsake.

The linnet chirp'd upon the furze as well,  
To my young sense, as sings the nightingale.  
Without was paradise—because within  
Was a keen relish, without taint of sin.

A town appear'd,—and where an infant  
went,

Could they determine, on themselves intent ?

I lost my way, and my companions me,  
And all, their comforts and tranquillity.

Mid-day it was, and, as the sun declined,  
The good, found early, I no more could find :

The men drank much, to whet the appetite ;  
And, growing heavy, drank to make them  
light ;

Then drank to relish joy, then further to  
excite.

Their cheerfulness did but a moment last ;  
Something fell short, or something overpast.  
The lads play'd idly with the helm and oar,  
And nervous women would be set on shore,  
Till 'civil dudgeon' grew, and peace would  
smile no more.

Now on the colder water faintly shone  
The sloping light—the cheerful day was gone ;  
Frown'd every cloud, and from the gather'd  
frown

The thunder burst, and rain came pattering  
down.

My torpid senses now my fears obey'd,  
When the fierce lightning on the eye-balls  
play'd.

Now, all the freshness of the morning fled,  
My spirits burden'd, and my heart was dead ;  
The female servants show'd a child their fear,  
And men, full wearied, wanted strength to  
cheer ;

And when, at length, the dreaded storm went  
past,

And there was peace and quietness at last,  
'Twas not the morning's quiet—it was not  
Pleasure revived, but Misery forgot :

It was not Joy that now commenced her reign,  
But mere relief from wretchedness and Pain.

So many a day, in life's advance, I knew ;  
So they commenced, and so they ended too.

All Promise they—all Joy as they began !  
But Joy grew less, and vanish'd as they ran !  
Errors and evils came in many a form,—  
The mind's delusion, and the passions' storm.

The promised joy, that like this morning  
rose,  
Broke on my view, then clouded at its close;  
E'en Love himself, that promiser of bliss,  
Made his best days of pleasure end like this :  
He mix'd his bitters in the cup of joy,  
Nor gave a bliss uninjured by alloy.

### THE MAGNET

[Date uncertain]

WHY force the backward heart on love,  
That of itself the flame might feel ?  
When you the Magnet's power would prove,  
Say, would you strike it on the Steel ?

From common flints you may by force  
Excite some transient sparks of fire ;  
And so, in natures rude and coarse,  
Compulsion may provoke desire.

But when, approaching by degrees,  
The Magnet to the Steel draws nigh,  
At once they feel, each other seize,  
And rest in mutual sympathy.

So must the Lover find his way  
To move the heart he hopes to win—  
Must not in distant forms delay—  
Must not in rude assaults begin.

For such attractive power has Love,  
We justly each extreme may fear :  
'Tis lost when we too distant prove,  
And when we rashly press too near.

### STORM AND CALM

[Date uncertain]

FROM THE ALBUM OF THE DUCHESS OF  
RUTLAND

At sea when threatening tempests rise,  
When angry winds the waves deform,  
The seaman lifts to Heaven his eyes,  
And deprecates the dreaded storm.  
'Ye furious powers, no more contend ;  
Ye winds and seas, your conflict end ;  
And on the mild subsiding deep,  
Let Fear repose and Terror sleep !'

At length the waves are hush'd in peace,  
O'er flying clouds the sun prevails ;  
The weary winds their efforts cease,  
And fill no more the flagging sails ;  
Fix'd to the deep the vessel rides  
Obedient to the changing tides ;  
No helm she feels, no course she keeps,  
But on the liquid marble sleeps.

Sick of a Calm the sailor lies,  
And views the still, reflecting seas ;  
Or, whistling to the burning skies,  
He hopes to wake the slumbering breeze :  
The silent noon, the solemn night,  
The same dull round of thoughts excite,  
Till, tired of the revolving train,  
He wishes for the Storm again.

Thus, when I felt the force of Love,  
When all the passion fill'd my breast,—  
When, trembling, with the storm I strove,  
And pray'd, but vainly pray'd, for rest ;  
'Twas tempest all, a dreadful strife  
For ease, for joy, for more than life :  
'Twas every hour to groan and sigh  
In grief, in fear, in jealousy.

I suffer'd much, but found at length  
Composure in my wounded heart ;  
The mind attain'd its former strength,  
And bade the lingering hopes depart ;  
Then Beauty smiled, and I was gay,  
I view'd her as the cheerful day ;  
And if she frown'd, the clouded sky  
Had greater terrors for mine eye.

I slept, I waked, and, morn and eve,  
The noon, the night appear'd the same ;  
No thought arose the soul to grieve,  
To me no thought of pleasure came ;  
Doom'd the dull comforts to receive  
Of wearied passions still and tame.—  
'Alas !' I cried, when years had flown—  
'Must no awakening joy be known ?  
Must never Hope's inspiring breeze  
Sweep off this dull and torpid ease—  
Must never Love's all-cheering ray  
Upon the frozen fancy play—  
Unless they seize the passive soul,  
And with resistless power control ?  
Then let me all their force sustain,  
And bring me back the Storm again.

## SATIRE

[Date uncertain]

I LOVE not the satiric Muse :  
 No man on earth would I abuse ;  
 Nor with empoison'd verses grieve  
 The most offending son of Eve.  
 Leave him to law, if he have done  
 What injures any other son :  
 It hardens man to see his name  
 Exposed to public mirth or shame ;  
 And rouses, as it spoils his rest,  
 The baser passions of his breast.

Attack a book—attack a song—  
 You will not do essential wrong ;  
 You may their blemishes expose,  
 And yet not be the writer's foes.  
 But when the man you thus attack,

And him expose with critic art,  
 You put a creature to the rack—

You wring, you agonise, his heart.  
 No farther honest Satire can

In all her enmity proceed,  
 Than passing by the wicked Man,  
 To execrate the wicked Deed.  
 If so much virtue yet remain  
 That he would feel the sting and pain,  
 That virtue is a reason why  
 The Muse her sting should not apply :  
 If no such Virtue yet survive,

What is your angry Satire worth,  
 But to arouse the sleeping hive,  
 And send the raging Passions forth,  
 In bold, vindictive, angry flight,  
 To sting wherever they alight ?

## A WEARY TRAVELLER

A WEARY Traveller walk'd his way,  
 With grief and want and pain oppress :  
 His looks were sad, his locks were grey :  
 He sought for food, he sigh'd for rest.

A wealthy grazier pass'd—' Attend,'  
 The sufferer cried—' some aid allow :'  
 ' Thou art not of my parish, Friend ;  
 Nor am I in mine office now.'

He dropt, and more impatient pray'd—  
 A mild adviser heard the word :  
 ' Be patient, Friend !' he kindly said,  
 ' And wait the leisure of the Lord.'

Another comes !—' Turn, stranger, turn !'

' Not so !' replied a voice : ' I mean  
 The candle of the Lord to burn  
 With mine own flock on Save-all Green ;

' To war with Satan, thrust for thrust ;  
 To gain my lamb he led astray ;  
 The Spirit drives me : on I must—  
 Yea, woe is me, if I delay !'

But WOMAN came ! by Heaven design'd  
 To ease the heart that throbs with pain—  
 She gave relief—abundant—kind—  
 And bade him go in peace again.

## BELVOIR CASTLE

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE DUCHESS  
 DOWAGER OF RUTLAND, AND INSCRIBED  
 IN HER ALBUM, 1812

WHEN native Britons British lands possess'd,  
 Their glory freedom—and their blessing rest—  
 A powerful chief this lofty Seat survey'd,  
 And here his mansion's strong foundation laid :  
 In his own ground the massy stone he sought,  
 From his own woods the rugged timbers  
 brought ;

Rudeness and greatness in his work com-  
 bined,—

An humble taste with an aspiring mind.  
 His herds the vale, his flocks the hills, o'er-  
 spread ;

Warriors and vassals at his table fed ;  
 Sons, kindred, servants, waited on his will,  
 And hail'd his mansion on the mighty hill.

In a new age a Saxon Lord appear'd,  
 And on the lofty base his dwelling rear'd :  
 Then first the grand but threatening form was  
 known,

And to the subject-vale a Castle shown,  
 Where strength alone appear'd,—the gloomy  
 wall

Enclosed the dark recess, the frowning hall ;  
 In chilling rooms the sullen fagot gleam'd ;  
 On the rude board the common banquet  
 steam'd ;

Astonish'd peasants fear'd the dreadful skill  
 That placed such wonders on their favourite  
 hill :

The soldier praised it as he march'd around,  
 And the dark building o'er the valley frown'd.

A Norman Baron, in succeeding times,  
 Here, while the minstrel sang heroic rhymes,

In feudal pomp appear'd. It was his praise  
A loftier dome with happier skill to raise;  
His halls, still gloomy, yet with grandeur rose;  
Here friends were feasted,—here confined  
were foes.

In distant chambers, with her female train,  
Dwelt the fair partner of his awful reign:  
Curb'd by no laws, his vassal-tribe he sway'd,—  
And here the chieftain, for his prowess praised,  
No soft'ning arts in those fierce times were  
found,

But rival Barons spread their terrors round;  
Each, in the fortress of his power, secure,  
Of foes was fearless, and of soldiers sure;  
And here the chieftain, for his prowess praised,  
Long held the Castle that his might had raised.

Came gentler times:—the Barons ceased to  
strive

With kingly power, yet felt their pomp sur-  
vive;

Impell'd by softening arts, by honour charm'd,  
Fair ladies studied and brave heroes arm'd.  
The Lord of Belvoir then his Castle view'd,  
Strong without form, and dignified but rude;  
The dark long passage, and the chambers  
small,

Recess and secret hold, he banish'd all,  
Took the rude gloom and terror from the place,  
And bade it shine with majesty and grace.

Then arras first o'er rugged walls appear'd,  
Bright lamps at eve the vast apartment  
cheer'd;

In each superior room were polish'd floors,  
Tall ponderous beds, and vast cathedral doors:  
All was improved within, and then below  
Fruits of the hardier climes were taught to  
grow;

The silver flagon on the table stood,  
And to the vassal left the horn and wood.  
Dress'd in his liveries, of his honours vain,  
Came at the Baron's call a menial train;  
Proud of their arms, his strength and their  
delight;

Loud in the feast, and fearless in the fight.

Then every eye the stately fabric drew  
To every part; for all were fair to view:  
The powerful chief the far-famed work  
descried,

And heard the public voice that waked his  
pride.

Pleased he began—'About, above, below,  
What more can wealth command, or science  
show?

Here taste and grandeur join with massy  
strength;

Slow comes perfection, but it comes at length.  
Still must I grieve: these halls and towers  
sublime,

Like vulgar domes, must feel the force of time;  
And, when decay'd, can future days repair  
What I in these have made so strong and fair?  
My future heirs shall want of power deplore,  
When Time destroys what Time can not  
restore.'

Sad in his glory, serious in his pride,  
At once the chief exulted and he sigh'd;  
Dreaming he sigh'd, and still, in sleep profound,  
His thoughts were fix'd within the favourite  
bound;

When lo! another Castle rose in view,  
That n an instant all his pride o'erthrew.

In that he saw what massy strength bestows,  
And what from grace and lighter beauty flows,  
Yet all harmonious; what was light and free,  
Robb'd not the weightier parts of dignity—  
Nor what was ponderous hid the work of grace,  
But all were just, and all in proper place:  
Terrace on terrace rose, and there was seen  
Adorn'd with flowery knolls the sloping green,  
Bounded by balmy shrubs from climes un-  
known,

And all the nobler trees that grace our own.

Above, he saw a giant-tower ascend,  
That seem'd the neighbouring beauty to  
defend

Of some light graceful dome,—'And this,' he  
cried,  
'Awakes my pleasure, though it wounds my  
pride.'

He saw apartments where appear'd to rise  
What seem'd as men, and fix'd on him their  
eyes,—

Pictures that spoke; and there were mirrors  
tall,

Doubling each wonder by reflecting all.  
He saw the genial board, the massy plate,  
Grace unaffected, unencumber'd state;  
And something reach'd him of the social arts,  
That soften manners, and that conquer hearts.

Wrapt in amazement, as he gazed he saw  
A form of heav'nly kind, and bow'd in awe:  
The spirit view'd him with benignant grace,  
And styl'd himself the Genius of the Place.  
'Gaze, and be glad!' he cried, 'for this,  
indeed,

Is the fair Seat that shall to thine succeed,

When these famed kingdoms shall assisters be,  
And one great sovereign rule the powerful  
three :

Then yon rich Vale, far stretching to the west,  
Beyond thy bound, shall be by *one* possess'd :  
Then shall true grace and dignity accord—  
With splendour, ease—the Castle with its  
Lord.

The Baron waked,—‘It was,’ he cried,  
‘a view

Lively as truth, and I will think it true :  
Some gentle spirit to my mind has brought  
Forms of fair works to be hereafter wrought ;  
But yet of mine a part will then remain,  
Nor will that Lord its humbler worth disdain ;  
Mix’d with his mightier pile shall mine be  
found,

By him protected, and with his renown’d ;  
He who its full destruction could command,  
A part shall save from the destroying hand,  
And say, “It long has stood,—still honour’d  
let it stand.”’

## THE WORLD OF DREAMS

[Date uncertain]

### I

AND is thy soul so wrapt in sleep ?  
Thy senses, thy affections, fled ?  
No play of fancy thine, to keep  
Oblivion from that grave, thy bed ?  
Then art thou but the breathing dead :  
I envy, but I pity too :  
The bravest may *my* terrors dread,  
The happiest fain *my* joys pursue.

### II

Soon as the real World I lose,  
Quick Fancy takes her wonted way,  
Or Baxter’s sprites my soul abuse—  
For how it is I cannot say,  
Nor to what powers a passive prey,  
I feel such bliss, I fear such pain ;  
But all is gloom, or all is gay,  
Soon as th’ ideal World I gain.

### III

Come, then, I woo thee, sacred Sleep !  
Vain troubles of the world, farewell !  
Spirits of Ill ! your distance keep—  
And in your own dominions dwell,

Ye, the sad emigrants from hell !  
Watch, dear seraphic beings, round,  
And these black Enemies repel ;  
Safe be my soul, my slumbers sound !

### IV

In vain I pray ! It is my sin  
That thus admits the shadowy throng.  
Oh ! now they break tumultuous in—  
Angels of darkness fierce and strong.  
Oh ! I am borne of fate along ;  
My soul, subdued, admits the foe,  
Perceives and yet endures the wrong,  
Resists, and yet prepares to go.

### V

Where am I now ? and what to meet ?  
Where I have been entrapt before :  
The wicked city’s vilest street,  
I know what I must now explore.  
The dark-brow’d throng more near and more,  
With murderous looks are on me thrust,  
And lo ! they ope the accursed door,  
And I must go—I know I must !

### VI

That female fiend !—Why is she there ?  
Alas ! I know her.—Oh, begone !  
Why is that tainted bosom bare,  
Why fix’d on me that eye of stone ?  
Why have they left us thus alone ?  
I saw the deed—why then appear ?  
Thou art not form’d of blood and bone !  
Come not, dread being, come not near !

### VII

So ! all is quiet, calm, serene ;  
I walk a noble mansion round—  
From room to room, from scene to scene,  
I breathless pass, in gloom profound :  
No human shape, no mortal sound—  
I feel an awe, I own a dread,  
And still proceed !—nor stop nor bound—  
And all is silent, all is dead.

### VIII

Now I’m hurried, borne along,  
All is business ! all alive !  
Heavens ! how mighty is the throng,  
Voices humming like a hive !  
Through the swelling crowd I strive,  
Bustling forth my way to trace :  
Never fated to arrive  
At the still-expected place.

## IX

Ah me ! how sweet the morning sun  
 Deigns on yon sleepy town to shine !  
 How soft those far-off rivers run—  
 Those trees their leafy heads decline !  
 Balm-breathing zephyrs, all divine,  
 Their health-imparting influence give :  
 Now, all that earth allows is mine—  
 Now, now I dream not, but I live.

## X

My friend my brother, lost in youth,  
 I meet in doubtful, glad surprise,  
 In conscious love, in fearless truth :  
 What pleasures in the meeting rise !  
 Ah ! brief enjoyment !—Pleasure dies  
 E'en in its birth, and turns to pain :  
 He meets me with hard glazed eyes !  
 He quits me—spurns me—with disdain.

## XI

I sail the sea, I walk the land ;  
 In all the world am I alone :  
 Silent I pace the sea-worn sand,  
 Silent I view the princely throne ;  
 I listen heartless for the tone  
 Of winds and waters, but in vain ;  
 Creation dies without a groan !  
 And I without a hope remain !

## XII

Unnumber'd riches I behold,  
 Glories untasted I survey :  
 My heart is sick, my bosom cold,  
 Friends ! neighbours ! kindred ! where are  
 they ?  
 In the sad, last, long, endless day !  
 When I can neither pray nor weep,  
 Doom'd o'er the sleeping world to stray,  
 And not to die, and not to sleep.

## XIII

Beside the summer sea I stand,  
 Where the slow billows swelling shine :  
 How beautiful this pearly sand,  
 That waves, and winds, and years refine :  
 Be this delicious quiet mine !  
 The joy of youth ! so sweet before,  
 When I could thus my frame recline,  
 And watch th' entangled weeds ashore.

## XIV

Yet, I remember not that sea,  
 That other shore on yonder side :  
 Between them narrow bound must be,  
 If equal rise th' opposing tide—  
 Lo ! lo ! they rise—and I abide  
 The peril of the meeting flood :  
 Away, away, my footsteps slide—  
 I pant upon the clinging mud !

## XV

Oh let me now possession take  
 Of this—it cannot be a dream.  
 Yes ! now the soul must be awake—  
 These pleasures are—they do not seem.  
 And is it true ? Oh joy extreme !  
 All whom I loved, and thought them dead,  
 Far down in Lethe's flowing stream,  
 And, with them, life's best pleasures fled :

## XVI

Yes, many a tear for them I shed—  
 Tears that relieve the anxious breast ;  
 And now, by heavenly favour led,  
 We meet—and One, the fairest, best,  
 Among them—ever-welcome guest !  
 Within the room, that seem'd destroy'd—  
 This room endear'd, and still possess'd,  
 By this dear party still enjoy'd.

## XVII

Speak to me ! speak ! that I may know  
 I am thus happy !—dearest, speak !  
 Those smiles that haunt fond memory show !  
 Joy makes us doubtful, wavering, weak ;  
 But yet 'tis joy—And all I seek  
 Is mine ! What glorious day is this !  
 Now let me bear with spirit meek  
 An hour of pure and perfect bliss.

## XVIII

But do ye look indeed as friends ?  
 Is there no change ? Are not ye cold ?  
 Oh ! I do dread that Fortune lends  
 Fictitious good !—that I behold,  
 To lose, these treasures, which of old  
 Were all my glory, all my pride :  
 May not these arms that form infold ?  
 Is all affection asks denied ?

## XIX

Say, what is this?—How are we tried,  
 In this sad world!—I know not these—  
 All strangers, none to me allied—  
 Those aspects blood and spirit freeze:  
 Dear forms, my wandering judgment spare;  
 And thou, most dear, these fiends disarm,  
 Resume thy wonted looks and air,  
 And break this melancholy charm.

## XX

And are they vanish'd? Is she lost?  
 Shall never day that form restore?  
 Oh! I am all by fears engross'd;  
 Sad truth has broken in once more,  
 And I the brief delight deplore:  
 How durst they such resemblance take?  
 Heavens! with what grace the mask they  
 wore!  
 Oh, from what visions I awake!

## XXI

Once more, once more upon the shore!  
 Now back the rolling ocean flows:  
 The rocky bed now far before  
 On the receding water grows—  
 The treasures and the wealth it owes  
 To human misery—all in view;  
 Fate all on me at once bestows,  
 From thousands robb'd and murder'd too.

## XXII

But, lo! whatever I can find  
 Grows mean and worthless as I view:  
 They promise, but they cheat the mind,  
 As promises are born to do.  
 How lovely every form and hue,  
 Till seized and master'd—Then arise,  
 For all that admiration drew,  
 All that our senses can despise!

## XXIII

Within the basis of a tower,  
 I saw a plant—it graced the spot;  
 There was within nor wind nor shower,  
 And this had life that flowers have not.  
 I drew it forth—Ah, luckless lot!  
 It was the mandrake; and the sound  
 Of anguish deeply smother'd shot  
 Into my breast with pang profound.

CR.

## XXIV

'I would I were a soaring bird,'  
 Said Folly, 'and I then would fly:  
 Some mocking Muse or Fairy heard—  
 'You can but fall—suppose you try?  
 And though you may not mount the sky,  
 You will not grovel in the mire.'  
 Hail, words of comfort! Now can I  
 Spurn earth, and to the air aspire.

## XXV

And this, before, might I have done  
 If I had courage—that is all:  
 'Tis easier now to soar than run;  
 Up! up!—we neither tire nor fall.  
 Children of dust, be yours to crawl  
 On the vile earth!—while, happier, I  
 Must listen to an inward call,  
 That bids me mount, that makes me fly.

## XXVI

I tumble from the loftiest tower,  
 Yet evil have I never found;  
 Supported by some favouring power,  
 I come in safety to the ground.  
 I rest upon the sea, the sound  
 Of many waters in mine ear,  
 Yet have no dread of being drown'd,  
 But see my way, and cease to fear.

## XXVII

Awake, there is no living man  
 Who may my fixed spirit shake;  
 But, sleeping, there is one who can,  
 And oft does he the trial make:  
 Against his might resolves I take,  
 And him oppose with high disdain;  
 But quickly all my powers forsake  
 My mind, and I resume my chain.

## XXVIII

I know not how, but I am brought  
 Into a large and Gothic hall,  
 Seated with those I never sought—  
 Kings, Caliphs, Kaisers,—silent all;  
 Pale as the dead; enrobed and tall,  
 Majestic, frozen, solemn, still;  
 They wake my fears, my wits appal,  
 And with both scorn and terror fill.

U 3

## XXIX

Now are they seated at a board  
 In that cold grandeur—I am there.  
 But what can mummied kings afford?  
 This is their meagre ghostly fare,  
 And proves what fleshless things they stare!  
 Yes! I am seated with the dead:  
 How great, and yet how mean they are!  
 Yes! I can scorn them while I dread.

## XXX

They're gone!—and in their room I see  
 A fairy being, form and dress  
 Brilliant as light; nor can there be  
 On earth that heavenly loveliness;  
 Nor words can that sweet look express,  
 Or tell what living gems adorn  
 That wondrous beauty: who can guess  
 Where such celestial charms were born?

## XXXI

Yet, as I wonder and admire,  
 The grace is gone, the glory dead;  
 And now it is but mean attire  
 Upon a shrivel'd beldame spread,  
 Laid loathsome on a pauper's bed,  
 Where wretchedness and woe are found,  
 And the faint putrid odour shed  
 By all that's foul and base around!

## XXXII

A garden this? oh! lovely breeze!  
 Oh! flowers that with such freshness  
 bloom!—  
 Flowers shall I call such forms as these,  
 Or this delicious air perfume?  
 Oh! this from better worlds must come;  
 On earth such beauty who can meet?  
 No! this is not the native home  
 Of things so pure, so bright, so sweet!

## XXXIII

Where? where?—am I reduced to this—  
 Thus sunk in poverty extreme?  
 Can I not these vile things dismiss?  
 No! they are things that more than seem:  
 This room with that cross-parting beam  
 Holds yonder squalid tribe and me—  
 But they were ever thus, nor dream  
 Of being wealthy, favour'd, free!—

## XXXIV

Shall I a coat and badge receive,  
 And sit among these crippled men,  
 And not go forth without the leave  
 Of him—and ask it humbly then—  
 Who reigns in this infernal den—  
 Where all beside in woe repine?  
 Yes, yes, I must: nor tongue nor pen  
 Can paint such misery as mine!

## XXXV

Wretches! if ye were only poor,  
 You would my sympathy engage;  
 Or were ye vicious, and no more,  
 I might be fill'd with manly rage;  
 Or had ye patience, wise and sage  
 We might such worthy sufferers call:  
 But ye are birds that suit your cage—  
 Poor, vile, impatient, worthless all!

## XXXVI

How came I hither? Oh, that Hag!  
 'Tis she the enchanting spell prepares;  
 By cruel witchcraft she can drag  
 My struggling being in her snares:  
 Oh, how triumphantly she glares!  
 But yet would leave me, could I make  
 Strong effort to subdue my cares.—  
 'TIS MADE!—and I to Freedom wake!

## HIS MOTHER'S WEDDING RING

[1814]

THE ring so worn, as you behold,  
 So thin, so pale, is yet of gold:  
 The passion such it was to prove;  
 Worn with life's cares, love yet was love

## PARHAM REVISITED

[1814]

YES, I behold again the place,  
 The seat of joy, the source of pain;  
 It brings in view the form and face  
 That I must never see again.  
 The night-bird's song that sweetly floats  
 On this soft gloom—this balmy air,  
 Brings to the mind her sweeter notes  
 That I again must never hear.



Lo! yonder shines that window's light,  
 My guide, my token, heretofore;  
 And now again it shines as bright,  
 When those dear eyes can shine no more.

Then hurry from this place away!  
 It gives not now the bliss it gave;  
 For Death has made its charm his prey,  
 And joy is buried in her grave.

## THE FRIEND IN LOVE

[1816]

## I

UNHAPPY is the wretch who feels  
 The trembling lover's ardent flame,  
 And yet the treacherous hope conceals  
 By using Friendship's colder name.

He must the lover's pangs endure,  
 And still the outward sign suppress;  
 Nor may expect the smiles that cure  
 The wounded heart's conceal'd distress

When her soft looks on others bend,  
 By him discern'd, to him denied,  
 He must be then the silent friend,  
 And all his jealous torments hide.

When she shall one blest youth select,  
 His bleeding heart must still approve;  
 Must every angry thought correct,  
 And strive to like, where she can love.

Heaven from my heart such pangs remove,  
 And let these feverish sufferings cease—  
 These pains without the hope of love,  
 These cares of friendship, not its peace.

## II

AND wilt thou never smile again;  
 Thy cruel purpose never shaken?  
 Hast thou no feeling for my pain,  
 • Refused, disdain'd, despised, forsaken?

Thy uncle crafty, careful, cold,  
 His wealth upon my mind imprinted;  
 His fields described, and praised his fold,  
 And jested, boasted, promised, hinted.

Thy aunt—I scorn'd the omen—spoke  
 Of lovers by thy scorn rejected;  
 But I the warning never took,  
 When chosen, cheer'd, received, respected.

Thy brother too—but all was plann'd  
 To murder peace—all freely granted;  
 And then I lived in fairy land,  
 Transported, bless'd, enrapt, enchanted.

Oh, what a dream of happy love!  
 From which the wise in time awaken;  
 While I must all its anguish prove,  
 Deceived, despised, abused, forsaken!

## FLIRTATION

## A DIALOGUE

FROM her own room, in summer's softest eve,  
 Stept *Celia* forth her *Delia* to receive,—  
 Joy in her looks, that half her tale declared.

*C.* War and the waves my fav'rite Youth  
 have spared;  
 Faithful and fond, through many a painful  
 year,

My Charles will come—Do give me joy,  
 my dear.

*D.* I give you joy, and so may he; but still,  
 'Tis right to question, if 'tis sure he will;  
 A sailor's open honest heart we prize,  
 But honest sailors have their ears and eyes.

*C.* Oh! but he surely will on me depend,  
 Nor dare to doubt the firmness of his friend.

*D.* Be not secure; the very best have foes,  
 And facts they would not to the world expose;  
 And these he may be told, if he converse with  
 those.

*C.* Speak you in friendship?—let it be  
 sincere

And naked truth,—and what have I to fear?

*D.* I speak in friendship; and I do confess,  
 If I were you, the Truth should wear a dress:  
 If Charles should doubt, as lovers do, though  
 blind,

Would you to him present the naked mind?  
 If it were clear as crystal, yet it checks  
 One's joy to think that he may fancy specks;  
 And now, in five long years, we scarcely know  
 How the mind gets them, and how large they  
 grow.

Let woman be as rigid as a nun,  
 She cannot censure and surmises shun.  
 Wonder not, then, at tales that Scandal tells—  
 Your father's rooms were not like sisters' cells;  
 Nor pious monks came there, nor prosing friars,  
 But well-dress'd captains, and approving  
 squires.

C. What these to me, admit th' account be true ?

D. Nay, that yourself describe—they came to you !

C. Well ! to my friend I may the truth confess,

Poor Captain Glimmer loved me to excess ;  
Flintham, the young solicitor, that wrote  
Those pretty verses, he began to dote ;  
That Youth from Oxford, when I used to stop  
A moment with him, at my feet would drop ;  
Nor less your Brother, whom, for your dear sake,

I to my favour often used to take :  
And was, vile world ! my character at stake ?  
If such reports my Sailor's ear should reach,  
What jealous thoughts and fancies may they teach. •

If without cause ill-judging men suspect,  
What may not all these harmless Truths effect ?  
And what, my Delia, if our virtues fail,  
What must we fear if conscious we are frail ;  
And well you know, my friend, nor fear t' impart,

The tender frailties of the yielding heart.

D. Speak for yourself, fair lady ! speak with care ;

I, not your frailties, but your suffering share.  
You may my counsel, if you will, refuse ;  
But pray beware, how you my name accuse.

C. Accuse you ! No ! there is no need of One,

To do what long the public voice has done.  
What misses then at school, forget the fall  
Of Ensign Bloomer, when he leapt the wall ?

That was a first exploit, and we were witness all ;

And that sad night, upon my faithful breast,  
We wept together, till we sank to rest ;  
You own'd your love—

D. A girl, a chit, a child !

Am I for this, and by a friend reviled ?

C. Then lay your hand, fair creature ! on your heart,

And say how many there have had a part :  
Six I remember ; and if Fame be true,  
The handsome Serjeant had his portion too.

D. A Serjeant ! Madam, if I might advise,  
Do use some small discretion in such lies :  
A Serjeant, Celia ?—

C. Handsome, smart, and clean.  
Yes ! and the fellow had a noble mien,

That might excuse you had you giv'n your hand,—

But this your father could not understand.

D. Mercy ! how pert and flippant are you grown,

As if you'd not a secret of your own ;  
Yet would you tremble should your Sailor know,

What I, or my small cabinet, could show :  
He might suspect a heart with many a wound  
Shallow and deep, could never more be sound ;  
That of one pierced so oft, so largely bled,  
The feeling ceases, and the love is dead ;  
But sense exists, and passion serves instead.

C. Injurious Delia ! cold, reproachful maid !

Is thus my confidential faith repaid ?  
Is this the counsel that we two have held,  
When duty trembled, and desire rebell'd ;  
The sister-vows we made, through many a night,

To aid each other in the arduous fight  
With the harsh-minded powers who never think

What nature needs, nor will at weakness wink :  
And now, thou cruel girl ! is all forgot,  
The wish oft whisper'd, the imagined lot,  
The secret Hymen, the sequester'd cot ?  
And will you thus our bond of friendship rend,  
And join the world in censure of your friend ?  
Oh ! 'tis not right ! as all with scorn must see,  
Although the certain mischief falls on me.

D. Nay, never weep ! but let this kiss restore,

And make our friendship perfect as before ;  
Do not our wiser selves, ourselves condemn,  
And yet we dearly love their faults and them ?  
So our reproofs to tender minds are shown,  
We treat their wanderings as we treat our own ;  
We are each other's conscience, and we tell  
Our friend her fault, because we wish her well ;  
We judge, nay prejudice, what may be her case,  
Fore-arm the soul, and shield her from disgrace.

Creatures in prison, ere the trying day,  
Their answers practise, and their powers essay.  
By means like these they guard against surprise,

And all the puzzling questions that may rise.  
' Guilty or not ? ' His lawyer thus address'd  
A wealthy rogue—' Not guilty, I protest—'  
' Why, then, my friend, we've nothing here to say,

But you're in danger ! prithee heed your way :

You know your truth, I where your error lies ;  
 From your 'Not guilty' will your danger rise ;  
 'Oh ! but I am, and I have here the gain  
 Of wicked craft : '—' Then let it *here* remain ;  
 For we must guard it by a sure defence,  
 And not professions of your innocence ;  
 For that's the way, whatever you suppose,  
 To slip your neck within the ready noose.'

Thus, my beloved friend ! a girl, if wise,  
 Upon her Prudence, not her Truth, relies ;  
 It is confess'd, that not the good and pure  
 Are in this world of calumny secure—  
 And therefore never let a lass rely  
 Upon her goodness and her chastity ;  
 Her very virtue makes her heedless : youth  
 Reveals imprudent, nay injurious, truth ;  
 Whereas, if conscious that she merit blame,  
 She grows discreet, and well defends her fame ;  
 And thus, offending, better makes her way—  
 As Joseph Surface argues in the play—  
 Than when in virtue's strength she proudly  
 stood,

So wrongly right, and so absurdly good.

Now, when your Charles shall be your judge,  
 and try

His own dear damsel—questioning how and  
 why—

Let her be ready, arm'd with prompt reply ;  
 No hesitation let the man discern,  
 But answer boldly, then accuse in turn ;  
 Some trifling points with candid speech con-  
 fess'd,

You gain a monstrous credit for the rest.  
 Then may you wear the Injured Lady frown,  
 And with your anger keep his malice down ;  
 Accuse, condemn, and make him glad at heart  
 To sue for pardon when you come to part ;  
 But let him have it ; let him go in peace,  
 And all inquiries of themselves will cease ;  
 To touch him nearer, and to hold him fast,  
 Have a few tears *in petto* at the last ;  
 But, this with care ! for 'tis a point of doubt,  
 If you should end with weeping or without.  
 'Tis true you much affect him by your pain,  
 But he may want to prove his power again ;  
 And, then, it spoils the look, and hurts the  
 eyes—

A girl is never handsome when she cries.

Take it for granted, in a general way,  
 The more you weep for men, the more you  
 may.

Save your resources ; for though now you cry  
 With good effect, you may not by and by.

It is a knack ; and there are those that weep  
 Without emotion that a man may sleep ;  
 Others disgust—'tis genius, not advice,  
 That will avail us in a thing so nice.

If you should love him, you have greater need  
 Of all your care, and may not then succeed :—  
 For that's our bane—we should be con-  
 querors all

With hearts untouch'd—our feelings cause  
 our fall.

But your experience aids you : you can hide  
 Your real weakness in your borrow'd pride.

But to the point—should so the Charge be  
 laid,

That nought against it fairly can be said—  
 How would you act ? You would not then  
 confess ?

C. Oh ! never ! no !—nor even my Truth  
 profess !

To mute contempt I would alone resort  
 For the Reporters, and for their Report.  
 If he profess'd forgiveness, I would cry—  
 'Forgive such faithlessness ! so would not I !

Such errors pardon ! he that so would act  
 Would, I am sure, be guilty of the fact ;  
 Charles, if I thought your spirit was so mean,  
 I would not longer in your walks be seen :  
 Could you such woman for a moment prize ?  
 You might forgive her, but you must despise.'

D. Bravo, my girl ! 'tis then our sex com-  
 mand,  
 When we can seize the weapon in their hand,  
 When we their charge so manage, that 'tis  
 found

To save the credit it was meant to wound.  
 Those who by reasons their acquittal seek,  
 Make the whole sex contemptible and weak ;  
 This, too, observe—that men of sense in love  
 Dupes more complete than fools and block-  
 heads prove ;

For all that knowledge lent them as a guide,  
 Goes off entirely to the lady's side ;  
 Whereas the blockhead rather sees the more,  
 And gains perception that he lack'd before.  
 His honest passion blinds the man of sense,  
 While want of feeling is the fool's defence ;  
 Arm'd with insensibility he comes,  
 When more repel'd he but the more assumes,  
 And thus succeeds where fails the man of  
 wit ;

For where we cannot conquer we submit.

But come, my love ! let us examine now  
 These Charges all ;—say, what shall we avow,

Admit, deny ; and which defend, and how ?  
That old affair between your friend and  
you,

When your fond Sailor bade his home adieu,  
May be forgotten ; yet we should prepare  
For all events : and are you guarded there ?

C. Oh ! 'tis long since—I might the whole  
deny—

'So poor, and so contemptible a lie !  
Charles, if 'tis pleasant to abuse your friend,  
Let there be something that she may defend ;  
This is too silly—'

D. Well you may appear  
With so much spirit—not a witness near ;  
Time puzzles judgment, and, when none  
explain,

You may assume the airs of high disdain ;  
But for my Brother—night and morn were  
you

Together found, th' inseparable two,  
Far from the haunts of vulgar prying men—  
In the old abbey—in the lonely glen—  
In the beech-wood—within the quarry made  
By hands long dead—within the silent glade,  
Where the moon gleams upon the spring that  
flows

By the grey willows as they stand in rows—  
Shall I proceed ? there's not a quiet spot  
In all the parish where the pair were not,  
Oft watch'd, oft seen. You must not so  
despise

This weighty charge—Now, what will you  
devise ?

C. 'Her brother ! What, Sir ? jealous of  
a child !

A friend's relation ! Why, the man is wild—  
A boy not yet at college ! Come, this proves  
Some truth in you ! This is a freak of Love's :  
I must forgive it, though I know not how  
A thing so very simple to allow.

Pray, if I meet my cousin's little boy,  
And take a kiss, would that your peace annoy ?  
But I remember Delia—yet to give  
A thought to this is folly, as I live—  
But I remember Delia made her prayer  
That I would try and give the Boy an air ;  
Yet awkward he, for all the pains we took—  
A bookish boy, his pleasure is his book ;  
And since the lad is grown to man's estate,  
We never speak—Your bookish youth I hate.'

D. Right ! and he cannot tell, with all his  
art,

Our father's will compell'd you both to part.

C. Nay, this is needless—

D. Oh ! when you are tried,  
And taught for trial, must I feed your pride ?  
Oh ! that's the vice of which I still com-  
plain :

Men could not triumph were not women vain.  
But now proceed—say *boyhood* in this case  
(The last obscure one) shields you from dis-  
grace.

But what of Shelley ? all your foes can prove,  
And all your friends, that here indeed was  
love.

For three long months you met as lovers meet,  
And half the town has seen him at your feet ;  
Then, on the evil day that saw you part,  
Your ashy looks betray'd your aching heart.  
With this against you—

C. This, my watchful friend,  
Confess I cannot ; therefore must defend.  
'Shelley ! dear Charles, how enter'd he your  
mind ?

Well may they say that jealousy is blind !  
Of all the men who talk'd with me of love,  
His were the offers I could least approve ;  
My father's choice—and, Charles, you must  
agree

That my good father seldom thinks with me—  
Or his had been the grief, while thou wert tost  
at sea !

It was so odious—when that man was near,  
My father never could himself appear ;  
Had I received his fav'rite with a frown,  
Upon my word he would have knock'd me  
down.'

D. Well ! grant you durst not frown—but  
people say

That you were dying when he went away :—  
Yes ! you were ill ! of that no doubts remain ;  
And how explain it ?—

C. Oh ! I'll soon explain :—  
'Isicken'd, say you, when the man was gone—  
Could I be well, if sickness would come on ?  
Fact follows fact : but is't of Nature's laws  
That one of course must be the other's cause ?  
Just as her husband tried his fav'rite gun,  
My cousin brought him forth his first-born  
son—

The birth might either flash or fright succeed,  
But neither, sure, were causes of the deed.  
That Shelley left us, it is very true—  
That sickness found me, I confess it too ;  
But that the one was cause, and one effect,  
Is a conceit I utterly reject.

You may, my Friend, demonstrate, if you please,  
That disappointment will bring on disease;  
But, if it should, I would be glad to know  
If 'tis a quinsy that such griefs bestow?  
A heart may suffer, if a lady doat;  
But will she feel her anguish in the throat?  
I've heard of pangs that tender folks endure,  
But not that linctuses and blisters cure.  
Your thoughts, my Delia!—

*D.* What I think of this?

Why! if he smile, it is not much amiss;  
But there are humours; and, by them possess'd,

A lover will not hearken to a jest.

Well, let this pass!—but, for the next affair,  
We know your father was indignant there;  
He hated Miller. Say! if Charles should press  
For explanation, what would you confess?  
You cannot there on his commands presume;  
Besides, you fainted in a public room;  
There own'd your flame, and, like heroic maid,  
The sovereign impulse of your will obey'd.  
What, to your thinking, was the world's disdain?

You could retort its insolence again:  
Your boundless passion boldly you avow'd,  
And spoke the purpose of your soul aloud;  
Associates, servants, friends, alike can prove  
The world-defying force of Celia's love.  
Did she not wish, nay vow, to poison her  
Whom, some durst whisper, Damon could prefer?

And then that frantic quarrel at the ball—  
It must be known, and he will hear it all.  
Nay! never frown, but cast about, in time,  
How best to answer what he thinks a crime:  
For what he thinks might have but little weight,

If you could answer—

*C.* Then I'll answer straight—  
Not without Truth; for who would vainly tell  
A wretched lie, when Truth might serve as well?

Mad I not fever? is not that the bane  
Of human wisdom? was I not insane?

'Oh! Charles, no more! would you recall  
the day

When it pleased Fate to take my wits away?  
How can I answer for a thousand things  
That this disorder to the sufferer brings?  
Is it not known, the men whom you dislike  
Are those who now the erring fancy strike?

Nor would it much surprise me, if 'twere true,  
That in those days of dread I slighted you:  
When the poor mind, illumined by no spark  
Of reason's light, was wandering in the dark,  
You must not wonder, if the vilest train  
Of evil thoughts were printed on the brain;  
Nor if the loyal and the faithful prove  
False to their king, and faithless to their love.  
Your thoughts on this?

*D.* With some you may succeed  
By such bold strokes; but they must love indeed.

*C.* Doubt you his passion?—

*D.* But, in five long years  
The passion settles—then the reason clears:  
Turbid is love, and to ferment inclined,  
But by and by grows sober and refined,  
And peers for facts; but if one can't rely  
On truth, one takes one's chance—you can but try.

Yet once again I must attention ask  
To a new Charge, and then resign my task.  
I would not hurt you; but confess at least  
That you were partial to that handsome Priest;

Say what they will of his religious mind,  
He was warm-hearted, and to ladies kind:  
Now, with his reverence you were daily seen,  
When it was winter and the weather keen,  
Traced to the mountains when the winds were strong,

And roughly bore you, arm in arm, along—  
That wintry wind, inspired by love or zeal,  
You were too faithful or too fond to feel.  
Shielded from inward and from outward harm  
By the strong spirit, and the fleshly arm—  
The winter-garden you could both admire,  
And leave his sisters at the parlour fire;  
You trusted not your speech these dames among—

Better the teeth should chatter, than the tongue!

Did not your father stop the pure delight  
Of this perambulating Love at night?  
It is reported, that his craft contrived  
To get the Priest with expedition wived,  
And sent away; for fathers will suspect  
Her inward worth, whose ways are incorrect—  
Patience, my dear! your Lover *will* appear;  
At this new tale, then, what will be your cheer?

'I hear,' says he,—and he will look as grim  
As if he heard his lass accusing him—

'I hear, my Celia, your alluring looks  
Kept the young Curate from his holy books :  
Parsons, we know, advise their flocks to pray ;  
But 'tis their duty—not the better they ;  
'Tis done for policy, for praise, for pay :  
Or let the very best be understood,  
They're men, you know, and men are flesh  
and blood.

Now, they do say—but let me not offend—  
You were too often with this pious friend,  
And spent your time——'

C. 'As people ought to spend.  
And, sir, if you of some divine would ask  
Aid in your doubts, it were a happy task ;  
But you, alas ! the while, are not perplex'd  
By the dark meaning of a threat'ning text ;  
You rather censure her who spends her time  
In search of Truth, as if it were a crime !  
Could I your dread of vulgar scandal feel,  
To whom should I, in my distress, appeal ?  
A time there may be, Charles, indeed there  
must,

When you will need a faithful Priest to trust,  
In conscience tender, but in counsel just.  
Charles, for my Fame I would in prudence  
strive,

And, if I could, would keep your Love alive ;  
But there are things that our attention claim,  
More near than Love, and more desired than  
Fame !'

D. 'But why in secret ?' he will ask you—

C. 'Why ?  
Oh ! Charles, could you the doubting spirit  
spy,  
Had you such fears, all hearers you would  
shun ;

What one confesses should be heard by one.  
Your mind is gross, and you have dwelt so  
long

With such companions, that you will be wrong :  
We fill our minds from those with whom we  
live,

And as your fears are Nature's, I forgive ;  
But learn your peace and my good name to  
prize,

And fears of fancy let us both despise.'

D. Enough, my friend ! Now let the man  
advance—

You are prepared, and nothing leave to chance :  
'Tis not sufficient that we're pure and just ;  
The wise to nothing but their wisdom trust.

Will he himself appear, or will he send,  
Duteous as warm ! and not alarm my friend ?

We need not ask—behold ! his servant  
comes :

His father's livery ! no fond heart presumes :  
Thus he prepares you—kindly gives you space  
To arm your mind, and rectify your face  
Now, read your Letter—while my faithful  
heart

Feels all that his can dictate or impart.

Nay ! bless you, love ! what melancholy  
tale

Conveys that paper ? Why so deadly pale ?  
It is his sister's writing, but the seal

Is red : he lives. What is it that you feel ?

C. O ! my dear friend ! let us from man  
retreat,

Or never trust him if we chance to meet—  
The fickle wretch ! that from our presence  
flies

To any flirt that any place supplies,  
And laughs at vows !—but see the Letter !—  
here—

'*Married at Guernsey !!!*'—Oh ! the Villain,  
dear !

#### LINES IN LAURA'S ALBUM

SEE with what ease the child-like god  
Assumes his reins, and shakes his rod ;  
How gaily, like a smiling boy,  
He seems his triumphs to enjoy,  
And looks as innocently mild  
As if he were indeed a child !  
But in that meekness who shall tell  
What vengeance sleeps, what terrors dwell ?

By him are tamed the fierce ;—the bold  
And haughty are by him controll'd ;  
The hero of th' ensanguined field  
Finds there is neither sword nor shield  
Availing here. Amid his books  
The student thinks how Laura looks ;  
The miser's self, with heart of lead,  
With all the nobler feelings fled,  
Has thrown his darling treasures by,  
And sigh'd for something worth a sigh.

Love over gentle natures reigns  
A gentle master ; yet his pains  
Are felt by them, are felt by all,  
The bitter sweet, the honied gall,  
Soft pleasing tears, heart-soothing sighs,  
Sweet pain, and joys that agonise.

Against a power like this, what arts,  
 What virtues, can secure our hearts ?  
 In vain are both—The good, the wise,  
 Have tender thoughts and wandering eyes :  
 And then, to banish Virtue's fear,  
 Like Virtue's self will Love appear ;  
 Bid e'ery anxious feeling cease,  
 And all be confidence and peace.

He such insidious method takes,  
 He seems to heal the wound he makes,  
 Till, master of the human breast,  
 He shows himself the foe of rest,  
 Pours in his doubts, his dread, his pains,  
 And now a very tyrant reigns.

If, then, his power we cannot shun,  
 And must endure—what can be done ?  
 To whom, thus bound, can we apply ?—  
 To Prudence, as our best ally :  
 For she, like Pallas, for the fight  
 Can arm our eye with clearer sight ;  
 Can teach the happy art that gains  
 A captive who will grace our chains ;  
 And, as we must the dart endure,  
 To bear the wound we cannot cure.

#### LINES WRITTEN AT WARWICK

'You that in warlike stories take delight,' &c.

HAIL! centre-county of our land, and known  
 For matchless worth and valour all thine own—  
 Warwick! renowned for him who best could  
 write,

Shakspeare the Bard, and him so fierce in fight,  
 Guy, thy brave Earl, who made whole armies  
 fly,

And giants fall—Who has not heard of Guy ?

Him sent his Lady, matchless in her charms,  
 To gain immortal glory by his arms,  
 Felice the fair, who, as her bard maintain'd,  
 The prize of beauty over Venus gain'd ;  
 For she, the goddess, had some trivial blot  
 That marr'd some beauty, which our nymph  
 had not :

But this apart, for in a fav'rite theme  
 Poets and lovers are allow'd to dream—  
 Still we believe the lady and her knight  
 Were matchless both: He in the glorious fight,  
 She in the bower by day, and festive hall by  
 night.

Urged by his love, th' adventurous Guy  
 proceeds,  
 And Europe wonders at his warlike deeds ;

Whatever prince his potent arm sustains,  
 However weak, the certain conquest gains ;  
 On every side the routed legions fly,  
 Numbers are nothing in the sight of Guy :  
 To him the injured made their sufferings  
 known,

And he relieved all sorrows, but his own :  
 Ladies who owed their freedom to his might  
 Were grieved to find his heart another's right :  
 The brood of giants, famous in those times,  
 Fell by his arm, and perish'd for their crimes.  
 Colbrand the strong, who by the Dane was  
 brought,

When he the crown of good Athelstan sought,  
 Fell by the prowess of our champion brave,  
 And his huge body found an English grave.

But what to Guy were men, or great or small,  
 Or one or many ?—he despatch'd them all ;  
 A huge dun Cow, the dread of all around,  
 A master-spirit in our hero found :  
 'Twas desolation all about her den—  
 Hersport was murder, and her meals were men.  
 At Dunmore Heath the monster he assail'd,  
 And o'er the fiercest of his foes prevail'd.

Nor fear'd he lions more than lions fear  
 Poor trembling shepherds, or the sheep they  
 shear :

A fiery dragon, whether green or red  
 The story tells not, by his valour bled ;  
 What more I know not, but by these 'tis plain  
 That Guy of Warwick never fought in vain.

When much of life in martial deeds was  
 spent,

His sovereign lady found her heart relent,  
 And gave her hand. Then, all was joy around,  
 And valiant Guy with love and glory crown'd ;  
 Then Warwick Castle wide its gate display'd,  
 And peace and pleasure this their dwelling  
 made.

Alas! not long—a hero knows not rest ;  
 A new sensation fill'd his anxious breast.  
 His fancy brought before his eyes a train  
 Of pensive shades, the ghosts of mortals slain ;  
 His dreams presented what his sword had  
 done ;

He saw the blood from wounded soldiers run,  
 And dying men, with every ghastly wound,  
 Breathed forth their souls upon the sanguine  
 ground.

Alarm'd at this, he dared no longer stay,  
 But left his bride, and as a pilgrim gray,  
 With staff and beads, went forth to weep and  
 fast and pray.

In vain his Felice sigh'd—nay, smiled in vain ;  
With all he loved he dared not long remain,  
But roved he knew not where, nor said, 'I  
come again.'

The widow'd countess pass'd her years in  
grief,

But sought in alms and holy deeds relief ;  
And many a pilgrim ask'd, with many a sigh,  
To give her tidings of the wandering Guy.

Perverse and cruel ! could it conscience  
ease,

A wife so lovely and so fond to tease ?  
Or could he not with her a saint become,  
And, like a quiet man, repent at home ?

How different those who now this seat  
possess !

No idle dreams disturb their happiness :  
The Lord who now presides o'er Warwick's  
towers,

To nobler purpose dedicates his powers :  
No deeds of horror fill his soul with fear,  
Nor conscience drives him from a home so  
dear :

The lovely Felice of the present day  
Dreads not her lord should from her presence  
stray ;

He feels the charm that binds him to a seat  
Where love and honour, joy and duty, meet.

But forty days could Guy his fair afford ;  
Not forty years would weary Warwick's lord :  
He better knows how charms like hers control  
All vagrant thoughts, and fill with her the  
soul ;

He better knows that not on mortal strife,  
Or deeds of blood, depend the bliss of life ;  
But on the ties that first the heart enchain,  
And every grace that bids the charm remain :  
Time will, we know, to beauty work despite,  
And youthful bloom will take with him its  
flight ;

But Love shall still subsist, and, undecay'd,  
Feel not one change of all that Time has made.

### ON A DRAWING OF THE ELM TREE

UNDER WHICH THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON  
STOOD SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE  
BATTLE OF WATERLOO

Is there one heart that beats on English  
ground,

One grateful spirit in the kingdoms round :  
One who had traced the progress of the foe,  
And does not hail the field of Waterloo ?

Who o'er that field, if but in thought, has gone  
Without a grateful wish for Wellington ?

Within that field of glory rose a Tree  
(Which a fair hand has given us here to see),  
A noble tree, that, pierced by many a ball,  
Fell not—decreed in time of peace to fall :  
Nor shall it die unsung ; for there shall be  
In many a noble verse the praise of thee,  
With that heroic chief—renown'd and glorious  
tree !—

Men shall divide thee, and thy smallest part  
Shall be to warm and stir the English heart ;  
Form'd into shapes as fancy may design,  
In all, fair fame and honour shall be thine.

The noblest ladies in the land with joy  
Shall own thy value in the slightest toy ;  
Preserved through life, it shall a treasure  
prove,

And left to friends, a legacy of love.

And thou, fair semblance of that tree  
sublime,

Shalt a memorial be to distant time ;  
Shalt wake a grateful sense in every heart,  
And noble thoughts to opening minds impart ;  
Who shall hereafter learn what deeds were  
done,

What nations freed by Heaven and Wellington.

Heroic tree we surely this may call—  
Wounded it fell, and numbers mourn'd its fall ;  
It fell for many here, but there it stood for all.

### ON RECEIVING FROM A LADY A PRESENT OF A RING

A RING to me Cecilia sends—  
And what to show ?—that we are friends ;  
That she with favour reads my lays,  
And sends a token of her praise ;  
Such as the nun, with heart of snow,  
Might on her confessor bestow ;  
Or which some favourite nymph would pay,  
Upon her grandsire's natal day,  
And to his trembling hand impart  
The offering of a feeling heart.

And what shall I return the fair  
And flattering nymph ?—A verse ?—a prayer ?  
For were a Ring my present too,  
I see the smile that must ensue ;—  
The smile that pleases though it stings,  
And says—' No more of giving rings :  
Remember, thirty years are gone,  
Old friend ! since you presented one !'



Well ! one there is, or one shall be,  
 To give a ring instead of me ;  
 And with it sacred vows for life  
 To love the fair—the angel-wife ;  
 In that one act may every grace,  
 And every blessing have their place—  
 And give to future hours the bliss,  
 The charm of life, derived from this ;  
 And when even love no more supplies—  
 When weary nature sinks to rest ;—  
 May brighter, steadier light arise,  
 And make the parting moment blest !

### TO A LADY, WITH SOME POETICAL EXTRACTS

SAY, shall thine eye, and with the eye the  
 mind,  
 Dwell on a work for thee alone design'd ?  
 Traced by my hand, selected by my heart,  
 Will it not pleasure to a friend impart ;  
 And her dear smile an ample payment prove  
 For this light labour of aspiring love ?

Read, but with partial mind, the themes  
 I choose :  
 A friend transcribes, and let a friend peruse :  
 This shall a charm to every verse impart,  
 And the cold line shall reach the willing heart :  
 For willing hearts the truest song approve,  
 All read with pleasure when they read with  
 love.

There are no passions to the Muse un-  
 known,—  
 Fear, sorrow, hope, joy, pity are her own :  
 She gives to each the strength, the tone, the  
 power,  
 By varying moods to suit the varying hour ;  
 She plays with each, and veils in changing  
 robes  
 The grief she pities, and the love she probes.

'Tis hers for wo the sullen smile to feign,  
 And Laughter lend to Envy's rankling pain ;  
 Soft Pity's look to Scorn, mild Friendship's  
 to Disdain.

Joy inexpressive with her tear she veils,  
 And weeps her transport, where expression  
 fails.

### TO A LADY ON LEAVING HER AT SIDMOUTH

YES ! I must go—it is a part  
 That cruel Fortune has assign'd me,—  
 Must go, and leave, with aching heart,  
 What most that heart adores, behind me.  
 Still I shall see thee on the sand  
 Till o'er the space the water rises,  
 Still shall in thought behind thee stand,  
 And watch the look affection prizes.  
 But ah ! what youth attends thy side,  
 With eyes that speak his soul's devotion—  
 To thee as constant as the tide  
 That gives the restless wave its motion ?  
 Still in thy train must he appear,  
 For ever gazing, smiling, talking ?  
 Ah ! would that he were sighing here,  
 And I were there beside thee walking !  
 Wilt thou to him that arm resign,  
 Who is to that dear heart a stranger,  
 And with those matchless looks of thine  
 The peace of this poor youth endanger ?  
 Away this fear that fancy makes  
 When night and death's dull image hide thee :  
 In sleep, to thee my mind awakes ;  
 Awake, it sleeps to all beside thee.  
 Who could in absence bear the pain  
 Of all this fierce and jealous feeling,  
 But for the hope to meet again,  
 And see those smiles all sorrow healing ?  
 Then shall we meet, and, heart to heart,  
 Lament that fate such friends should sever,  
 And I shall say—' We must not part ; '  
 And thou wilt answer—' Never, never ! '

### TO SARAH, COUNTESS OF JERSEY, ON HER BIRTHDAY

OF all the subjects poetry commands,  
 Praise is the hardest nicely to bestow ;  
 'Tis like the streams in Afric's burning sands,  
 Exhausted now, and now they overflow.  
 As heaping fuel on a kindling fire,  
 So deals a thoughtless poet with his praise ;  
 For when he would the cheerful warmth inspire,  
 He chokes the very thing he hopes to raise.  
 How shall I, then, the happy medium hit,  
 And give the just proportion to my song ?  
 How speak of beauty, elegance, and wit,  
 Yet fear at once to offend thee and to wrong ?

Sure to offend, if far the Muse should soar,  
And sure to wrong thee if her strength I  
spare ;

Still, in my doubts, this comfort I explore—  
That all confess what I must not declare.

Yet, on this day, in every passing year,  
Poets the tribute of their praise may bring ;  
Nor should thy virtues then be so severe,  
As to forbid us of thy worth to sing.  
Still I forbear : for why should I portray  
Those looks that seize—that mind that wins  
the heart—

Since all the world, on this propitious day,  
Will tell how lovely and how good thou art.

### TO A LADY WHO DESIRED SOME VERSES AT PARTING

OH ! do not ask the Muse to show  
Or how we met, or how we part :  
The bliss, the pain, too well I know,  
That seize in turn this faithful heart.  
That meeting—it was tumult all—  
The eye was pleased, the soul was glad ;  
But thus to memory I recall,  
And feel the parting doubly sad.

Yes, it was pleasant so to meet  
For us, who fear'd to meet no more,  
When every passing hour was sweet—  
Sweeter, we thought, than all before.  
When eye from eye new meanings steal,  
When hearts approach, and thoughts unite—  
Then is, indeed, the time to feel,  
But, Laura ! not a time to write.

And when at length compell'd to part,  
When fear is strong, and fancy weak,  
When in some distant good the heart  
For present ease is forced to seek,—  
When hurried spirits fall and rise,  
As on the changing views we dwell,  
How vainly then the sufferer tries  
In studied verse his pains to tell !

Time brings, indeed, his slow relief,  
In whom the passions live and die ;  
He gives the bright'ning smile to grief,  
And his the soft consoling sigh :  
Till then, we vainly wish the power  
To paint the grief, or use the pen :  
But distant far that quiet hour :  
And I must feel and grieve till then.

### LINES FROM A DISCARDED POEM (1817)

ON a calm, cold evening, when the moon was  
high,  
And rode sublime within the cloudy sky,  
She sat within her hut, nor seem'd to feel  
Or cold, or want, but turn'd her idle wheel ;  
And with sad song its melancholy tone  
Mix'd—all unconscious that she dwelt alone.

### ON DEATH OF SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY

Nov. 6, 1818

THUS had I written, so a friend advised,  
Whom as the first of counsellors I prized,  
The best of guides to my assuming pen,  
The best of fathers, husbands, judges, men.  
' This will he read,' I said, ' and I shall hear  
Opinion wise, instructive, mild, sincere,  
For I that mind respect, for I the man revere.'

I had no boding fear ! but thought to see  
Those who were thine, who look'd for all to  
thee ;

And thou wert all ! there was, when thou  
wert by,

Diffused around the rare felicity  
That wisdom, worth, and kindness can impart  
To form the mind and gratify the heart.

Yes ! I was proud to speak to thee, as one  
Who had approved the little I had done,  
And taught me what I should do !—Thou  
wouldst raise

My doubting spirit by a smile of praise,  
And words of comfort ! great was thy delight  
Fear to expel, and ardour to excite,  
To wrest th' oppressor's arm, and do the  
injured right.

Thou hadst the tear for pity, and thy breast  
Felt for the sad, the weary, the oppress'd !  
And now, afflicting change ! all join with me,  
And feel, lamented ROMILLY, for thee.

### LINES

*Aldborough, October, 1823.*

THUS once again, my native place, I come  
Thee to salute—my earliest, latest home :  
Much are we alter'd both, but I behold  
In thee a youth renew'd—whilst I am old.  
The works of man from dying we may save,  
But man himself moves onward to the grave.

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